



# SIDONIUS

## POEMS AND LETTERS

WITH AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION,  
INTRODUCTION, AND NOTES BY

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IN TWO VOLUMES

I

POEMS

LETTERS, BOOKS I-II



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## PREFACE

THE present volume contains the first English translation of the poems of Sidonius. The task of translating the letters was originally assigned to the late Dr. E. V. Arnold. He had drafted a rough rendering, to which I have been repeatedly indebted for an apt word or phrase, but as he had not had time to consider fully the many problems presented by the Latin text, it seemed advisable to rewrite the translation. I would fain hope that its present form is such as would have met with his approval.

An attempt has been made, no doubt with indifferent success, to discover and express the whole meaning of every sentence. There is a comfortable doctrine, which has actually been propounded with reference to Sidonius, that when a writer is very hard to understand there is no need to translate him accurately. It is scarcely necessary to expose this fallacy, but one may remark that the many serious mistakes made by historians and biographers through failure to grasp the meaning of Sidonius show that no one can afford to despise conscientious verbal scholarship.

The translation, especially in the case of the poems, is accompanied by numerous explanatory notes; it would not have been intelligible without them. They have involved a good deal of pioneer work and many excursions into paths outside the

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regular beat of a mere Latinist. I cannot expect that they will completely satisfy either the specialist or the non-specialist reader; I do, however, cherish the hope that they will clear up some obscurities and that a few of them will be of some interest to students of history and to some other scholars.

Shortly before his death Professor L. C. Purs̄er, who had once thought of publishing a commentary on the poems of Sidonius, most kindly put at my disposal the materials which he had collected. It is a melancholy pleasure to express my deep gratitude for a thoroughly characteristic act of generosity. Dr. W. H. Semple was good enough to read the proofs of the translation and of a large part of the notes. I am indebted to him for many acute and valuable observations; my obligations to him are by no means confined to the places where I have expressly acknowledged them.

W. B. A.

# INTRODUCTION

## I. HISTORICAL SKETCH:

### FROM A.D. 406 TO THE "FALL OF THE WESTERN EMPIRE"

THE sources available for our knowledge of the fifth century are meagre and often obscure, and the attempts of modern historians to reconstruct the facts show marked divergences. Even if the facts were certain, it would not be easy to present in short compass the history of a period so confused, so full of intrigues and struggles in so many countries.

Gaul holds a position of special prominence not only in the career of Sidonius but in the story of the decline and fall of the western Empire. It is reasonable, therefore, to start our narrative at the end of the year 406, when four German peoples<sup>1</sup> (Asding and Siling Vandals, Alans, and Suevians) made an incursion across the Rhine, sacking Mainz, burning Trier, and spreading their depredations far and wide. The invasion of Gaul by the usurper Constantine from Britain in 407 may have checked them for a short time, but he soon allowed them to pursue their activities without serious opposition. In 409 they crossed the Pyrenees and occupied a large part of Spain. Meanwhile the Burgundians

<sup>1</sup> On the geographical situation of the various German peoples see Bury, *Later Roman Empire* I., pp. 99 f.

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had likewise moved across the Rhine from their territory on the upper Main, and in the end the Emperor Honorius, making a virtue of necessity, allowed them to remain in occupation of the province of Upper Germany (*Germania Prima*)<sup>1</sup> as *foederati*<sup>2</sup> (413).

We must now turn to the Visigoths, who were destined to play a leading part in the dissolution of the Empire. In 410 Alaric, their king, died, a few months after his capture of Rome. Athaulf, his successor, left Italy for Gaul early in the year 412, carrying off with him Placidia, sister of Honorius. After bringing about the fall of the new usurper Jovinus, who had started an insurrection in 411 and found many adherents, he made overtures to the Emperor, but as he refused to give up Placidia, nothing came of them. He then occupied Narbonne, where he married Placidia (414). Vigorous measures by the general Constantius made his situation in Gaul precarious; he therefore proceeded to Spain early in the following year, probably intending to found a Visigothic kingdom in the ~~province~~ of Tarraconensis, which had not been occupied by the previous German invaders. He was, however, assassinated at Barcelona; seven days

<sup>1</sup> Its capital was Worms (Borbetomagus).

<sup>2</sup> The *foederati* were the successors of the old client-peoples who had acted as buffer-states to protect the Roman frontiers. The ruler of a "federate" people received an annual subsidy, which in theory represented the pay of the soldiers at his disposal. When necessity compelled the Romans to admit foreign peoples into Roman territory with the status of *foederati*, the Roman land-owners had to surrender a certain proportion (generally one third) of their property to the new settlers.

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later the same fate befel his successor, and Wallia became king. Debarred from food-supplies by the Romans and foiled in an attempt to cross to Africa, Wallia came to terms, agreeing, in return for large supplies of corn, to restore Placidia and to make war upon the German invaders of Spain (416). On the first day of the following year Constantius married Placidia.

Wallia vigorously set about his task of conquering his "barbarian" neighbours. In their alarm they sought to make terms with Rome. The Asding Vandals and the Suevians seem to have gained recognition as "federates" of the Empire, but Wallia was left to work his will with the other two peoples. In a campaign of two years (416-418) he almost wiped out the Silings, and inflicted such grievous losses on the Alans that the survivors at last sought refuge with the Asdings in Gallaecia. The Vandal king Gunderic thus became "King of the Vandals *and Alans*," and handed down the title to his successors.

Then followed a momentous event. It was decided to allow the Goths to settle in Gaul as *foederati*. The lands assigned to them were the province of Aquitania Secunda (extending from the Loire to the Garonne) and adjacent portions of Narbonensis (including Toulouse) and of Novempopulana (west of Narbonensis). Thus began the Visigothic kingdom in Gaul. Wallia died soon after leading his people to their new abode, and Theodoric I reigned in his stead.<sup>1</sup> The same period saw the quelling of a

<sup>1</sup> The arrangements for the new settlers were completed under Theodoric. The Goths received remarkably favourable terms, as the Roman land-owners had to surrender two-thirds of their property to them.

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serious revolution among the Aremoricians of Brittany.<sup>1</sup> In Spain, soon after the departure of the Goths, Gunderic, king of the Vandals and Alans, attacked and defeated the Suevians, and, although more than once defeated by Roman forces, ultimately triumphed and established himself in the southern province of Baetica, from which his successor Geiseric was soon to aim a blow at the very heart of Rome.

National feeling in Gaul, which boded ill for the future of the Empire, had been accentuated in the time of the usurpers Constantine and Jovinus, who had found many adherents in that country, and it was further heightened by the severe measures which Constantius took against the ringleaders of the insurgents. It was more than ever necessary to consolidate the loyalty of the Gallo-Romans. From this time dates the regular custom of appointing natives to the office of Praetorian Prefect of Gaul and to the other important official posts in the country. Another significant measure was the organisation in the year 418 of the Council of the Seven Provinces (*Concilium Septem Provinciarum*), in which leading ~~men~~ the southern provinces met every year to discuss matters affecting the public interest and to make recommendations to the authorities. Among the provinces which sent representatives were

<sup>1</sup> The Aremorici inhabited the coast-land between the Seine and the Loire. The troubles in Britain in the later years of the Roman occupation caused many of its inhabitants to emigrate to Aremorica, which owes its modern name to them. In the fifth century *Britannus* is not infrequently used to denote a native or inhabitant of Aremorica (cf. Sidonius, *Epist.* III. 9. 2; more explicitly *Britannos supra Ligerim sitos*, I. 7. 5), and it is not always easy to determine the meaning of the word.

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Aquitania Secunda and Novempopulana;<sup>1</sup> thus the Roman inhabitants of the occupied lands were stimulated to retain their Roman feelings in their "barbarian" environment. The council met at Arles, which had now become the residence of the Praetorian Prefect, after Trier had been sacked not only by the Vandals but on two occasions by the Ripuarian Franks from the lower Rhine. Arles became a proud capital, and everything possible was done to make it a centre of Roman influence.

On the 2nd of July, 419, Flavius Placidus Valentinianus, the future Emperor, was born. His father, Constantius, was made a colleague in the Empire by Honorius on 8th February, 421, but died in the same year. He had worked hard, and with considerable success, to maintain the cohesion of the Empire in the West. On the 15th of August, 423, Honorius died. After two years of the usurper John, the boy Valentinian came to the throne as Valentinian III. For the first twelve years of his reign his mother Placidia acted as regent. From this time the disintegration of the Empire proceeds apace, despite the emergence of a great military leader in the person of Aëtius. The Goths, under Theodoric I, had turned longing eyes on the Mediterranean shores of Narbonensis. Early in the new reign they were hurled back by Aëtius from the walls of Arles to their own territory, where they remained comparatively quiet, but always a potential source of danger, for a few years. The "barbarian" peoples on the Rhine-frontier could not be trusted to keep the peace for long, and the Aremorici might

<sup>1</sup> For an enumeration of the Septem Provinciae see note on Sidonius, *Epist.* I. 3. 2.



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cause trouble again. Gaul thus made constant demands upon the vigilance of Aëtius. This fact, together with the enmity of Placidia and her partiality for less able supporters, prevented him from intervening in another sphere where his tried troops and his generalship were sorely wanted.

In the year 427 Count Boniface, governor of the diocese of Africa, on being summoned home to give an account of his actions, disobeyed and was proclaimed a rebel. Unable to cope with the forces sent against him, he took the fatal step of inviting the Vandals to come to his help from Spain.<sup>1</sup> King Gunderic lent a willing ear to this proposal, but died before he could carry it into effect (428). His successor Geiseric was only too glad to complete the preparations. In May, A.D. 429, the combined host of Vandals and Alans crossed the Straits of Gibraltar. The Imperial government came to terms with Boniface, but this reconciliation made no difference to the greedy schemes of the Vandals. Boniface, now entrusted with the defence of Africa, was no match for the enemy, and was eventually compelled, in the spring of 430, to shut himself up in Hippo Regius, which underwent a long siege.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile the Vandals made themselves masters of the valuable corn-lands of Tunisia. In this critical situation Placidia appealed to the eastern Emperor, Theodosius II, for help. His trusted general, Aspar, entered Africa with a combined force drawn from east and west, which perhaps succeeded in raising the siege of Hippo, but soon sustained a severe

<sup>1</sup> For a different account see *Cambridge Medieval History*, I., p. 409.

<sup>2</sup> It was in the course of this siege that St. Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, died.

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defeat (431 or 432) and was unable to prevent the capture of town after town by Geiseric. Soon almost every important place, with the exception of Cirta (the capital of Numidia) and Carthage, was in the hands of the Vandals. Not until the year 435 did relief come. Aëtius, with his formidable army, composed largely of Huns, seemed now in a position to turn his attention to Africa. Geiseric dared not challenge him. On the 11th of February, 435, a treaty was concluded, whereby the Vandals were allowed to retain, as *foederati* of the Empire, a part of the African diocese (probably the provinces of Mauretania Sitifensis and Numidia and the north-western corner of the old proconsular province). With a man like Geiseric such an arrangement could not be permanent. An unrestricted African dominion was his first and chief object. His covetous eyes were already fixed upon Carthage.

We must now return to Aëtius. In 428 he had driven the Ripuarian Franks back from the left bank of the Rhine. Another successful contest with the Franks seems to have taken place about three years later. In the interval he had conducted decisive operations against the Iuthungi and other troublesome peoples in Noricum and Rhaetia,<sup>1</sup> and he had been made generalissimo of the western forces of the Empire. In 432, the year of his first consulship, he was deposed from his command to make way for Placidia's favourite, Boniface, who was recalled from Africa. Thereupon he concluded a treaty with the Franks and marched against Boniface, but was defeated near Ariminum. Boniface died two months later, and was succeeded by his son-in-

<sup>1</sup> See Sidonius, *Carm.* 7. 233 f.

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law Sebastian. Aëtius betook himself to his old friends, the Huns, and returned to Italy with a large force. Placidia was compelled to reinstate him. The treaty with Geiseric in 435 enabled him to concentrate his attention once more upon Gaul. In that year the Burgundians, who seem to have been joined by Alani from Mainz, invaded the province of Belgica Prima (the district round Trier and Metz). About the same time the Ripuarian Franks descended upon the same province from the north, after taking Cologne, and Trier was captured for the fourth time in a quarter of a century. Matters were further complicated by a revolt of the oppressed classes (peasants and slaves) under one Tibatto. With the aid of a large force of Huns from Germany, Aëtius utterly routed the Burgundians and laid their lands waste (436). The Frankish invasion seems to have evaporated, and the capture of Tibatto quelled the insurrection of the Bagaudae, as they were called (437). But the Goths were quick to avail themselves of these disturbances, and once more invaded the Mediterranean fringe of Narbonensis. Litorius, the chief lieutenant of Aëtius, had had to subdue a revolt in Aremorica;<sup>1</sup> he now hastened southward and relieved the siege of Narbonne (437). After a short-lived peace, negotiated by Avitus (the future emperor), the Goths renewed their attacks on Roman territory, but Litorius in a series of battles drove them back. Near Toulouse, their capital, they turned at bay. Litorius was defeated and fatally wounded in a bloody battle. The Goths,

<sup>1</sup> Sidonius, *Carm.* 7. 246 f. For the subsequent events mentioned in this paragraph see *vv.* 295-315 and 475-480 of the same poem.

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though victorious, had suffered heavily, and were in a mood to listen to Avitus, who had just become Praetorian Prefect, when he proposed terms of peace. It is probable that the Goths were now recognised as a sovereign people (no longer *foederati*), and that their domains were increased by the cession to them of the whole of Novempopulana.<sup>1</sup>

This treaty was far from being the only blow which the Roman power and prestige sustained in that momentous year (439). Geiseric perfidiously seized Carthage and made himself complete master of the proconsular province. His ruthless expropriation of the land-owners, his drastic proceedings against the orthodox Church, and the other features of his conquest are related in all histories of the period and need not be dwelt upon here. Both Valentinian, who had now taken the reins of government into his own hands, and Theodosius, the eastern Emperor, were seized with consternation. Theodosius sent a powerful naval expedition to bring the Vandals to their senses, but it never got beyond Sicily, where it was delayed by Geiseric's diplomacy until trouble nearer home necessitated its recall. A treaty was then made (442), in which the best provinces of Africa were surrendered to the Vandals, though Geiseric undertook to supply Rome with corn and gave his son Huneric as a hostage. He was soon compelled by disturbances in his own realm, caused by his despotic conduct, to seek a further *rapprochement* with the western Emperor. He brought about the betrothal of Huneric to Valentinian's daughter,

See Stein, *Gesch. d. spätöm. Reiches*, I. 482, n. 3. Most authorities assign this improvement in the Gothic status to an earlier date; see note on Sidonius, *Carm.*, 7. 215 sqq.

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Eudocia, who was then six years old (445). Huneric (who was restored to his father at this time) was already married to a daughter of the Visigothic king, Theodoric I, but a charge of attempted poisoning was made a pretext for discarding her, and she was sent back to her father with her ears and nose cut off. From 442 to the death of Valentinian in 455 Geiseric kept the peace with the Empire, though this did not prevent him from encouraging the designs of the Huns on Gaul.

Meanwhile Aëtius had been active in Gaul, but the details of his operations are not very clear.<sup>1</sup> We learn that the Alani and the Burgundians, who had suffered grievously in the disaster of 436, at last had lands assigned them, in which they settled as *foederati*. One body of Alans found a home in the neighbourhood of Valence (440 or earlier), another, under King Goar, the old supporter of the usurper Jovinus, was settled near Orléans (442). In the following year the Burgundians received a permanent abode in Sapaudia (Savoy). It was apparently about this time that Roman troops were finally withdrawn from Britain. In 446 Aëtius obtained the signal honour of a third consulship. We have scanty details of another rising in Aremorica, occasioned by the exactions of the Roman treasury. It began perhaps in 446, and lasted for some years; in the end the Aremoricians gained a position of complete independence, nominally as *foederati*, and some other Celtic peoples who had joined them seem to have won the same privilege. Some time before 446 the Ripuarian Franks were once more flung back across the Rhine by Aëtius. Probably after this came the

<sup>1</sup> The account in this paragraph follows Stein.

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attempt of the Salian Franks under Chlogio to extend their territory to the Somme, and their defeat near Vicus Helenae.<sup>1</sup> In Spain the Suevians, under their king Rechiar, who had recently married a daughter of Theodoric, crowned their long-standing hostility by devastating the province of Tarraconensis, the great stronghold of the Roman Empire in Spain.

The approach of the half-century was darkened by the growing menace of the Huns under Attila. It was fortunate for Aëtius and for the Roman cause that the specious overtures of Attila were regarded with suspicion by Theodoric and that the mission of Avitus secured the support of the Goths. The bloody battle of the Mauriac (or Catalaunian) Plains, near Troyes, in which Theodoric lost his life, saved Gaul from the invaders (451). Aëtius, however, did not follow up his success. He persuaded the new Gothic king, Thorismund, to lead his warriors home, and Attila was enabled to withdraw with comparative ease, to ravage northern Italy and to threaten the existence of Rome until his death in 453. Before the end of this year Thorismund, who had renewed the old policy of Gothic expansion, was murdered by his brothers Theodoric and Frederic, and the former ascended the throne as Theodoric II. The new king had a tincture of Latin civilisation, gained partly through the teaching of Avitus,<sup>2</sup> and at the beginning of his reign he gave signal proofs of friendship. He resumed the "federate" status which his father had discarded, then he proceeded to Spain, where he quelled an anti-Roman peasant rising and induced his Suevian brother-in-law, Rechiar, to restore the

<sup>1</sup> Sidonius, *Carm.* 5. 212 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Sidonius, *Carm.* 7. 495-498.

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province of Carthaginiensis to the Empire (454). The western Roman world was beginning to breathe more freely, when it was suddenly convulsed by the news that Aëtius had been murdered by his Emperor.

Whatever one may think of Valentinian's motives, the results of this deed were serious. The Goths became restless, the Salian Franks under Chlogio took Cambrai and extended their conquests to the Somme, the Ripuarian Franks and the Alamanni once more crossed the Rhine, and Count Marcellinus, who commanded in Dalmatia, declared himself independent of the western Empire. A conspiracy was formed, in which Petronius Maximus, a prominent noble who had filled the highest offices of state, joined forces with old followers of Aëtius, and on the 15th of March, 455, Valentinian met the fate which he had brought upon Aëtius in the previous year. With him died that loyalty to the dynastic principle which had protected his family for nearly a century. The Empire of the West now begins to fade away in a miserable succession of brief reigns. The first in this series of ill-fated princes was the Petronius Maximus who has just been mentioned. Little more than two months after his accession he was seeking flight before the approach of Geiseric, whom he had wantonly provoked. The furious crowd fell upon him, stoned him to death, and tore him limb from limb. The Vandals entered Rome three days later and plundered it for two weeks, returning at last to Carthage with immense booty and some very important captives, including Eudoxia, the widow of Valentinian, her two daughters, and Gaudentius, the younger son of Aëtius.

Petronius Maximus had made Avitus a *magister*

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*militum*,<sup>1</sup> and had sent him to secure the favour of Theodoric for the new régime. Avitus was at the court of Toulouse when news came of the Emperor's assassination and of the sack of Rome. Theodoric urged him to seize the throne, and offered his support. Avitus allowed himself to be persuaded. A hastily summoned gathering of Gallo-Roman senators met at Viernum, or Ugernum (Beaucaire, near Arles),<sup>2</sup> and enthusiastically hailed him as the future champion of Gaul and saviour of the Empire. On the 9th of July, 455, he was proclaimed Emperor by the soldiers. He reached Rome in September, and assumed the consulship at the beginning of the following year. The Vandals claimed his immediate attention. Geiseric had seized the lands which had been left to Rome by the treaty of 442, and had declared his independence of the Roman suzerainty. Avitus tried both threats and armed force against him. An armament which he sent to Sicily under Ricimer foiled a Vandal attempt on Agrigentum and afterwards won a naval victory near Corsica (456). But the Gallic Emperor was looked on askance by the Italian senators, and the people began to murmur when a failure of the corn-supply threatened them with famine. Avitus agreed to lessen the number of mouths to be fed by dismissing the force of federate troops which had accompanied him from Gaul. But these had first to be paid; he therefore melted down and sold a number of bronze statues which had escaped the ravages of the Vandals. An open revolt broke out. At the head of it were Ricimer, the ambitious Suevian whom Avitus had raised to the

<sup>1</sup> See n. on Sidonius, *Carm.* 7. 377 f.

<sup>2</sup> Sidonius, *Carm.* 7. 572.



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second military command of the West, and Majorian, friend and old companion-in-arms of Ricimer, who had been made *comes domesticorum* by Valentinian after the murder of Aëtius.<sup>1</sup> Avitus, deprived of his loyal troops, was helpless, and fled to Arles. After a vain appeal to Theodoric, who had gone to Spain and was engaged in a merciless war with the Suevian king, he mustered a force as best he could and marched into Italy. Near Placentia he was defeated and captured. He was spared for the moment and allowed to become Bishop of Placentia (October 17th or 18th, 456);<sup>2</sup> but he could not feel safe, and soon attempted to return to his home in Auvergne. He died on the way; possibly he was murdered.

The fall of Avitus aroused consternation and indignation in Gaul. Both the national feeling of the Gallo-Romans and their loyalty to the Empire had received a rude shock. The central government had shown its weakness in many ways; Africa was lost to the Empire, and the Roman name, of which they were proud, was sadly tarnished. In order to repair the distresses of the time the resources of Gaul had been raided with special severity. To Avitus the Empire had owed much in time of peril. Both as Gauls and as Romans they had looked to him to inaugurate a brighter era. And now these hopes had gone for ever; the Italian senators, it seemed, would rather let the Empire go to ruin than allow the supreme power to be held by one outside their own charmed circle. It is no wonder if this sudden

<sup>1</sup> See n. on Sidonius, *Carm.* 5. 308.

<sup>2</sup> For this merciful method of making a fallen potentate harmless we may compare the case of Glycerius, below, p. xxx.

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revulsion of feeling led to desperate measures. Lyons was the centre of the revolt. The rebellious Gallo-Roman nobles allied themselves with the Burgundians and admitted a Burgundian garrison into the town. The insurgents, or a section of them, seem to have invited Count Marcellinus to lead them and to assume the Imperial diadem.<sup>1</sup> He had held a command under Aëtius, and after the murder of his old chief he had shown vigour and decision and the courage of his convictions;<sup>2</sup> he would be an inspiring leader, and he would make short work of an Italian clique if it stood in his way. Theodoric, who had seen in his compact with Avitus a satisfactory accommodation of Gothic and Imperial interests, was now in no mood to keep the peace. On his return from Spain he renewed the old attacks on Narbonensis.

The coalition of Ricimer and Majorian resulted in the elevation of the latter to the throne (457).<sup>3</sup> Whatever one may think of his part in the fall of Avitus, Majorian was certainly a man of ability and character. Apart from internal affairs, his most urgent task was the crushing of Geiseric. He enlisted a great army, composed mostly of foreign contingents, and prepared a large fleet, which was to assemble off the coast of Spain. His plan was to march through Gaul and Spain, gathering contingents from the federate peoples as he went, and then to cross the strait for a decisive struggle. He

<sup>1</sup> See n. on Sidonius, *Epist.* 1. 11. 6.

<sup>2</sup> See above, p. xx.

<sup>3</sup> There is a controversy about the exact date of Majorian's formal accession. See nn. on Sidonius, *Carm.* 5. 9 ff. and 384 ff.

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set out late in the year 458. On his way he had to subdue the rebellious Gallo-Romans.<sup>1</sup> Lyons capitulated, apparently a little before the Emperor arrived in person, on favourable terms which seem to have been arranged by the quaestor Petrus.<sup>2</sup> Majorian showed a wise leniency. Even the severe taxation which he at first imposed upon the insurgents seems to have been remitted, and danger from the Burgundians was removed by allowing them to occupy the province of Lugdunensis Prima, with the exception of Lyons itself. The Goths had next to be mastered; this was accomplished by Aegidius, who, with the aid of reinforcements sent by the Emperor, drove them back from Arles. In their case also Majorian was conciliatory, and Theodoric agreed to a continuation of the old federate status.<sup>3</sup>

Majorian's expedition came to grief in the following year (460). An act of treachery enabled Geiseric to surprise the Roman fleet off the coast of Spain between Cartagena and Alicante and to capture a great number of the ships. Majorian had to conclude a humiliating treaty by which Geiseric probably obtained legal possession of the African provinces which he had recently seized; he may also have received at the same time Corsica, Sardinia, and the Balearic Islands, which were certainly in his possession a few years later. After spending some time in

<sup>1</sup> It seems probable that Marcellinus dissociated himself from the revolt when he heard that his old comrade-in-arms Majorian had been proclaimed Emperor.

<sup>2</sup> Sidonius, *Carm.* 5. 568-573.

<sup>3</sup> In this and in the preceding paragraph I have for the most part followed the orthodox version. Stein's ingenious account, though valuable, seems at times to strain the evidence, including the evidence of Sidonius.

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Gaul, Majorian returned to Italy with a small following, having disbanded the "barbarian" contingents enlisted for the Vandal campaign. On the 2nd of August, 461, he was attacked and captured near Tortona by a large body of Ricimer's armed retainers, and five days later he was beheaded.

Ricimer, the Patrician (a title which he had held since 457),<sup>1</sup> was now the real ruler of the West, though as a "barbarian" and an Arian he could not aspire to the throne. In November, 461, he set up a puppet-Emperor in the person of Libius Severus. But he soon found himself in difficulties. Geiseric, who hated him, made piratical attacks on the coasts of Italy and Sicily. Marcellinus, who probably held the rank of *magister militum* in Dalmatia, and Aegidius, the *magister militum* in Gaul, threw off their allegiance, and Theodoric renounced the compact which he had made with Majorian. The eastern Emperor was induced to hold Marcellinus in check, but the troubles in the Gallic provinces were not so easily ended. The threatened invasion of Italy by Aegidius was kept off by purchasing Gothic and Burgundian friendship at a heavy price. The Burgundians, under King Gundioc, were allowed to occupy Lyons, and their territory was further enlarged, so that they barred the land-route to Italy; the sea-route was barred by allowing the Goths to seize Narbonne and the greater part of Narbonensis Prima, which extended from the Pyrenees to the Rhone (462). The Goths were also encouraged to extend their conquests in Spain, but when Theodoric's brother Frederic tried to push the Gothic power

<sup>1</sup> On this title as applied to Ricimer see n. on Sidonius, *Carm.* 2. 90.

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beyond the Loire he was signally defeated near Orléans by Aegidius (463), who had found a valuable ally in Childeric, king of the Salian Franks. Fortunately for Ricimer and his allies, Aegidius died in the following year. But the wily Vandal had still to be dealt with. Geiseric thought it politic to listen at last to the representations of Leo, the eastern Emperor, so far as to give up Eudoxia and her daughter Placidia, whom he sent to Constantinople; Eudocia, the other daughter, who had married Himeric, was retained. In return for this concession he is said to have received as much of Eudocia's inheritance as was situated in the East and also a promise from Leo to abstain from hostilities against him. Soon he addressed further demands to the West, claiming a large share of the property of Valentinian III, and making the capture of Gaudentius a pretext for claiming the property of Aëtius. In addition he demanded that Olybrius, an accommodating senator who had married Placidia, either in Africa or in Constantinople, should receive the sceptre of the West. Annual raids on Italy and Sicily reinforced his demands. Nothing short of a great effort of East and West in common had any prospect of crushing him.

On the 14th of November, 465, Libius Severus died. He had really been a usurper, as Leo, who had never acknowledged him, had legally been the sole Roman Emperor since the death of Majorian.<sup>1</sup> There followed seventeen months in which Leo had no colleague in the West. Geiseric continued to press the claims of Olybrius and to attack Italy and Sicily. At last he had the temerity to raid the Peloponnese.

<sup>1</sup> So Iordanes, *Rom.* 335; but his statement has been questioned.

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Leo was stung to action. He now acceded to insistent requests from Italy, and appointed a colleague to rule in the West and to collaborate in a great offensive against the Vandals. The man of his choice was Anthemius, who besides being a son-in-law of the late Emperor Marcian had a distinguished record of public service to his credit. Anthemius was created Augustus on the 12th of April, 467. In the same year his daughter Alypia was given in marriage to Ricimer. Next year the great offensive was launched. Basiliscus, the commander-in-chief, sailed with an enormous force to take Carthage; an army began to march from Egypt through Tripolitana to co-operate in the conquest of Africa; Marcellinus, who held the chief command of the western forces, was sent to capture Sardinia. Basiliscus, after defeating a Vandal fleet sent against him, anchored near Carthage, and had Geiseric at his mercy, but the resourceful Vandal persuaded him (probably with the aid of a large bribe) to grant a truce of five days. Thereupon the Vandals brought up fire-ships and launched an unexpected attack, inflicting such serious losses that Basiliscus retreated to Sicily. The final blow came with the assassination of Marcellinus, who had crossed over to Sicily after recovering Sardinia. This dastardly deed was almost certainly brought about by Ricimer, whose position in Italy would have been very insecure if Marcellinus had come back covered with glory. Geiseric promptly regained Sardinia, and a little later Sicily. The eastern forces were withdrawn, and those of the West were required for the defence of Italy and for operations against the Goths in Gaul.

In 466 Euric had murdered his brother Theodoric

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and become king of the Visigoths. It soon became clear that he meant to throw off his nominal dependence on Rome and to extend his dominions over all the Gallic lands. The union of East and West for the war against Geiseric, with whom he had meditated an alliance, deterred him for a time, but the disastrous failure of the great expedition gave him his opportunity. He seems to have counted on a large measure of support from the Gallo-Romans. His success in this direction was probably less than he had expected, owing to the antagonism of the Catholic Church and the traditional loyalty of the upper classes; but Arvandus, the Praetorian Prefect, and many others went over to his side. Arvandus was summoned to Rome, impeached for High Treason, and condemned to death, though the sentence was afterwards commuted to one of banishment. Matters now came to a crisis. Anthemius prepared an expedition, and the Bretons of *Aremorica*, under King *Riothamus*, marched to defend the territory north of the *Loire*. *Riothamus* was completely defeated near *Vicus Dolensis* (*Déols*, *dép. Indre*), and fled with the remnant of his army to the *Burgundians*. *Euric* thus became master of *Tours* and *Bourges* and of a large part of the province of *Aquitania Prima* (east of *Aquitania Secunda*, which had been occupied by the *Goths* for more than fifty years); he was, however, prevented from extending his conquests north of the *Loire* by *Count Paulus* and, after the death of *Paulus* in 470, by *Syagrius*, son of *Aegidius*, with the aid of the *Franks* under King *Childeric*. But there were prizes to be won in other parts. In *Aquitania Prima* *Auvergne*, whose inhabitants

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prided themselves on their Latin blood<sup>1</sup> and on their connexion with Rome, still remained unconquered; more important still were those cities of Narbonensis which still remained Roman, especially Arles, the headquarters of the Roman administration. But before these could be subdued the army which Anthemius had organised had to be met and defeated. It crossed the Alps in 471, under the leadership of Anthemiolus, son of the Emperor, and three other generals, but on its way to Arles it was totally defeated on the left bank of the Rhone, all its generals being slain. Euric overran and plundered the lower Rhone-valley from Valence to the sea, but as he had impinged on Burgundian territory he thought it prudent to abandon for the present his conquests in that region and to transfer his attention to two centres of opposition farther west. A fierce war had been waged with the Suevians in Spain for some years. Euric himself took command, and ultimately (about 473) made himself master of practically the whole of the peninsula except the old home of the Suevians in the north-west. This diversion of large Gothic forces made it easier for the Arvernians to defend their capital (modern Clermont-Ferrand). The exploits of Ecdicius,<sup>2</sup> the youngest son of the late Emperor Avitus, the courageous helpfulness of his brother-in-law Apollinaris Sidonius, now Bishop of Auvergne, and the garrison provided by the Burgundians, who had no desire to see a further extension of Gothic power, enabled the townsmen to hold out for some years. But their resistance could not go on for ever, and the Empire was

<sup>1</sup> See n. on Sidonius, *Carm.* 7. 139.

<sup>2</sup> See especially Sidonius, *Epist.* III. 3.



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too weak to defend its last strongholds in the west.

In 472 Ricimer, whom no Emperor could satisfy in the long run, brought about the fall and assassination of Anthemius. A few weeks later he himself died, and before the end of the year the Emperor whom he had set up, Olybrius (who, as we have seen, had been Geiseric's nominee) was also no more. Four months later (March, 473) the Burgundian Gundobad, Ricimer's successor as Patrician, caused the *comes domesticorum* Glycerius to be proclaimed Emperor by the troops in Ravenna. This election, however, was not recognised by the eastern Emperor, Leo I, who nominated Julius Nepos, a nephew of Marcellinus. Glycerius could offer no resistance, and was put out of harm's way by being consecrated Bishop of Salona, in Dalmatia. Nepos seems at first to have planned vigorous measures against the Goths, and he made the heroic Ecdicius *magister militum praesentalis* and Patrician. But a change soon occurred, the details of which are not entirely clear. Whatever the reason, Ecdicius soon lost his new dignities and was replaced by Orestes, a Roman from Pannonia, who had once been Attila's secretary. Nepos, in agreement with the Burgundian king, sought to arrange terms of peace with Euric (475). The negotiations were entrusted to a delegation of bishops. They arranged that Auvergne should be surrendered, while the Empire should still rule in southern Provence, including Arles and Marseilles. It was a bitter blow to the Arvernians to be thus sacrificed by an Empire for which they had fought and suffered so long. The rule of Rome in the west was now crumbling to pieces. The Danubian

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provinces had actually, if not nominally, thrown off their allegiance, and Spain was lost.

The rest of the miserable tale may be told in a few words. Orestes rose against Nepos, compelling him to take refuge in Dalmatia. Preferring to remain Patrician, he elevated to the Imperial throne, on 31st October, 475, his son Romulus, who is generally designated by the nickname given him in pity or contempt for his youth, Augustulus. Less than a year sufficed to end this usurping reign. The "barbarian" mercenaries quartered in Italy, unable to obtain pay from a depleted exchequer, demanded that one third of the land should be made over to them. When their demand was refused they rose in rebellion and proclaimed their leader, the Scirian Odovacar, King of Italy. Augustulus was mercifully allowed to retire into private life. In this situation Euric found an opportunity of winning the coveted strip of Provence for which the Romans had recently sacrificed Auvergne (476 or 477).

Nepos was still legally Emperor, and thus the eastern Emperor had a colleague until the death of Nepos in 480. Even apart from this, as modern historians do not fail to point out, it is incorrect to speak of the year 476 as marking the fall of the Roman Empire in the West.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, the events of that year were of immense significance. Italy, the ancient home of the Empire, now saw one third of her land in possession of "barbarians," and began to suffer the fate which had already overtaken the proud lands of Gaul and Africa. She had a foreign ruler in her midst, unhampered by the presence even of a puppet-Emperor such as Ricimer

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Bury, *op. cit.*, I., p. 408.

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had liked to set up. It is true that the Roman Empire continued to exist in the West even after the death of Nepos. Legally the lack of a western Emperor did not matter; the Emperor who ruled in Constantinople ruled also in Italy, and even "barbarian" rulers such as Odovacar and Theodoric the Ostrogoth found it expedient to acknowledge his sovereignty. But such legal technicalities and such ostentatious deference cannot hide the fact that the substance of power was in other hands and that a momentous change had taken place.

## II. LIFE AND WORKS OF SIDONIUS

GAIVS SOLLIUS MODESTUS(?) APOLLINARIS SIDONIUS<sup>1</sup> was born at Lyons (Lugdunum) on the 5th of November;<sup>2</sup> the year is uncertain, but it must have been about A.D. 430.<sup>3</sup> His family was one of considerable distinction. His great-grandfather had held an official position of some importance, his grandfather, the first of his family to adopt the Christian religion,

<sup>1</sup> In his works he is usually called simply Sollius or Sidonius. The latter is not strictly a surname (*cognomen*) but a *signum*. These *signa*, which properly denoted membership of some association, were often adopted by persons of good birth. *Modestus* has strong MS. authority in the *incipit* of *Carm.* 4 less strong in the *subscriptions* of most books of the *Letter*. It may be authentic, but it ought perhaps to be regarded with as much suspicion as *Sophronius* in the name of Jerom. The notion that it is due to a wrong inference from *Epi.* IX. 12. 3 is scarcely credible.

<sup>2</sup> *Carm.* 20. 1.

<sup>3</sup> This is inferred from *Epist.* VIII. 6. 5, which tells us that in the year 449 he was *adulescens atque adhuc nuper ex puer* on the whole, 331 or 332 seems the most likely date.

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had been Praetorian Prefect of Gaul, and his father held the same exalted position when Sidonius was little more than a boy.<sup>1</sup> His mother was connected with the distinguished house of the Aviti. We do not know where he received his education; some think it was partly at Lyons and partly at Arles. The great institutions of higher learning in Gaul, which had flourished so long under Imperial patronage, seem by this time to have fallen on evil days,<sup>2</sup> but the upper classes still retained their predilection for the traditional training of pagan Rome as represented in the schools of grammar and rhetoric. Sidonius went through the usual courses in grammar, literature, rhetoric, philosophy (with its satellites arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music)<sup>3</sup> and law. He has recorded the names of two of his teachers, Hoënius,<sup>4</sup> who taught him poetry, and Eusebius,<sup>5</sup> who taught him philosophy. He mentions Claudianus Mamertus, the famous author of the *De Statu Animae*, as having conducted edifying philosophical disputations with him and other ardent students;<sup>6</sup> but it is not certain

<sup>1</sup> See *Epist.* I. 3. 1, with note; cf. III. 12. 5, V. 9. 1 (grandfather), V. 9. 2, VIII. 6. 5 (father).

<sup>2</sup> It is a frequent mistake to attribute to the age of Sidonius the conditions enjoyed a little earlier by Ausonius as a professor at Bordeaux. The disturbed state of the country and the growing financial stringency had in all probability caused the withdrawal of active Imperial patronage from the schools of "grammar" and rhetoric. See Roger, *L'enseignement des lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin*, Paris, 1905, pp. 48-88. This excellent book has not received the attention which it deserves.

<sup>3</sup> See *Carm.* 14 *epist.* § 2, *Carm.* 22 *epist.* §§ 2 sq.

<sup>4</sup> *Carm.* 9. 313.

<sup>5</sup> *Epist.* IV. 1. 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Epist.* IV. 11. 2.

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that Claudianus held any official post as a teacher, or that this seminar, as one might call it, formed part of Sidonius's regular course of higher education; it may have taken place later and in a different place. Certainly these teachers never made Sidonius a philosopher. He seems to have learnt enough Greek to construe Menander<sup>1</sup> without much difficulty.

A good deal of the learning acquired in the schools at this time was somewhat superficial, and much of it was in "tabloid" form. Historical examples were a regular part of the educational course; Sidonius was always ready to produce one or a dozen at the shortest notice (though not always accurately) to embellish his writings. The way in which he repeats the same stock illustrations time after time casts some light on the nature of the instruction received. The case was somewhat similar with myths and legends, which sprout up everywhere in his poetry, and with literary criticism, in which lists of past authors with brief ready-made descriptions were served up to the student. Nevertheless a great deal of literature was read, with comments on diction, style, and subject-matter, great emphasis being placed on antiquarian details, especially those dealing with mythology. Sidonius shows an intimate acquaintance with many writers, especially poets, and he must have acquired much of it in his student days. Among the poets, Virgil, Horace, Lucan, Juvenal, Martial, Statius, Ausonius, Claudian and others were known to him at first hand, most of them intimately.<sup>2</sup> Among the

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* IV. 12. 1.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note that he shows even in his early works some knowledge of the Christian poet Prudentius. He had also some acquaintance with Plautus, and he seems to have been fond of Terence.

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prose authors whom he knew well were Pliny the Younger, Apuleius, and Symmachus.<sup>1</sup> But the letter counted for more than the spirit. The authors of the past were treasures from which to steal subject-matter, learned allusions, and tricks of diction. The highest compliment which could be paid by one fifth-century writer to another was that he recalled one or more of the ancients. Creative work in the true sense was not fostered in the schools. The training in rhetoric had the same tendency as that given by the *grammaticus*. The study of rhetoric, though not without good points, had for centuries emphasized the importance of form rather than of matter. A straining after effect, an ostentatious and often unnatural use of words, forced antithesis, far-fetched conceits, silly paradoxes, over-elaboration and a constant sacrifice of clearness to cleverness—these were some of the features which this training too often produced. They are all found abundantly in Sidonius, and, strange to say, his contemporaries admired them, even if they did not always understand what he meant.

Amid the almost complete silence of Sidonius about his formative years we read of one trivial incident which gave him much pleasure.<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of the year 449 the new consul Astyrius inaugurated his office in an imposing ceremony at Arles, and the young Sidonius, whose father was Praetorian Prefect of Gaul at the time, occupied a place of great honour,

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps Fronto should be added to this list. Cicero is often mentioned, and some acquaintance with his works (especially the letters *Ad Familiares*) is shown. There are also indications that the works of Sallust, Livy, Seneca, and Tacitus were to some extent known to Sidonius.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* VIII. 6. 5.

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being allowed to stand beside the curule chair. There is no doubt that the young man was already planning to follow the family tradition by entering the government service and attaining to high office, perhaps even to the consulship itself, which none of his family had reached. His prospects, already bright, were soon greatly enhanced when he married Papianilla, daughter of Avitus. The marriage, which was obviously a happy one, brought him the delightful estate of Avitacum, near Clermont-Ferrand. Auvergne, in which it was situated, thus became "a second fatherland"<sup>1</sup> to this young Lyonese, who was destined to have a pathetic opportunity of showing his devotion to it. There seem to have been four children of the marriage, a son and three daughters.<sup>2</sup>

Avitus was proclaimed Emperor in July, A.D. 455,

<sup>1</sup> *Carm.* 17. 20.

<sup>2</sup> The son is the Apollinaris to whom *Epist.* III. 13 is addressed; cf. V. 9. 4, V. 11. 3, VIII. 6. 12, IX. 1. 5. When Count Victorius, the governor, was driven out of Auvergne about the year 480 owing to his outrageous conduct, Apollinaris accompanied him in his flight to Rome. There Victorius, continuing his misbehaviour, was put to death, and Apollinaris was imprisoned at Milan. He succeeded in escaping and returned to Auvergne. In 507 he fought along with other Arvernians in the disastrous battle against Clovis at Vouillé (Campus Vogladensis). About eight years later, when his father's old see of Clermont fell vacant, he obtained it, not, it seems, without a good deal of intrigue (in which his wife and a sister named Alcima joined) and bribery (*Greg. Tur. Hist. Fr.* III. 2). He died a few months after his installation. Sidonius makes no mention of Alcima, but he mentions as daughters Severiana (*Epist.* II. 12. 2) and Roscia (V. 16. 5). Mommsen, perhaps unnecessarily, doubts whether these three names all belong to separate persons. He also credits Sidonius with twins. This amusing error, which has become an article of faith with subsequent writers on Sidonius, is due to a very unscholarly misunderstanding of *Carm.* 17. 3.

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and his proud son-in-law accompanied him to Rome. On the first of January in the following year the new Emperor assumed the consulship, and Sidonius delivered to an applauding throng a long panegyric in verse (*Carmen* 7). The honour of a bronze statue in the Forum of Trajan was decreed to the young poet, whose fortune now seemed to be made.<sup>1</sup> But his elation was short-lived. The fall of Avitus and the subsequent rebellion in Gaul have already been described.<sup>2</sup> Sidonius might well be excused for joining in the insurrection. Petrus, the Imperial secretary, who seems to have arranged the terms of capitulation, would no doubt recognise this; moreover he was a literary man himself,<sup>3</sup> and he probably admired the young poet who had so recently won the plaudits of the Romans. It seems certain that he secured pardon for Sidonius at the earliest opportunity. When Majorian arrived in Lyons late in the year 458 Sidonius, already pardoned (see *Carm.* 4), delivered a panegyric in his honour (*Carm.* 5). The concluding lines of the poem show that Majorian had not yet fully decided the fate of Lyons and of the insurgent Gallo-Romans. The poet seeks to arouse his pity, and professes to detect in the Imperial countenance a look of compassion. Whether the poet's pleading worked on Majorian or not, it is certain that he was merciful, though he imposed a heavy tax as a punishment. In *Carmen* 13, which was in all probability composed very soon after the panegyric, Sidonius pleads for a remission of this burden, and it seems safe to conclude that his plea

<sup>1</sup> *Carm.* 8. 7-10, *Epist.* IX. 16. 3 vv. 25-28.

<sup>2</sup> See pp. xxi-xxiv.

<sup>3</sup> See *Carm.* 3, with note on v. 5.



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was successful. Although it must have been very hard to forgive the man who had conspired with Ricimer to bring about the downfall of Avitus, the generosity of Majorian, his innate nobility of character and his attractive personality won the heart of Sidonius, and Majorian did what he could to cement their friendship. In the following year or in the year 460 we find Sidonius occupying a government post at Rome,<sup>1</sup> and in the year 461 we find that he has the title of Count (*Comes*),<sup>2</sup> which, if not given in virtue of a definite office of state, betokened at least that he was an accepted member of the court circle. In that year he travelled from Auvergne to Arles, where Majorian was sojourning after the disastrous failure of his expedition against Geiseric,<sup>3</sup> and he has left us a long and interesting account of an Imperial dinner-party at which he was a guest.<sup>4</sup> But the end of Majorian was at hand, and in August of that year Sidonius was once more bereft of an Imperial patron.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See note on *commilitio recenti*, *Epist.* I. 11. 3, also n. on § 1 of the same letter. So far as is known, Sidonius had not previously held any appointment in the Imperial civil service. It has been conjectured that he was *tribunus et notarius* under Avitus. He may have been, but there is absolutely no evidence of it.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* I. 11. 13.

<sup>3</sup> See p. xxiv.

<sup>4</sup> *Epist.* I. 11. By an unfortunate inadvertence M. A. Løyen attributes to Mr. Stevens and personally approves the view that this party took place in A.D. 459; see *Journ. Rom. Stud.* XXIV. (1934), p. 85. This date is quite impossible, as the letter itself shows (§ 10); the date 459 is suggested by Mr. Stevens not for this dinner-party but for the one mentioned in *Epist.* IX. 13. 4 (Stevens, *Sidonius Apollinaris*, p. 51).

<sup>5</sup> For the fall of Majorian see p. xxv.

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How he spent his time in the ensuing six years may be partially inferred from his own writings, several of which, both poems and letters, must have been written in this period, although anything like an accurate dating is generally impossible.<sup>1</sup> It seems certain that he lived partly in the old family home at Lyons and partly at Avitacum, and that from time to time he visited numerous friends in different parts of the country, passing many a happy day like those which he spent with Tonantius Ferreolus and Apollinaris (*Epist.* II. 9). His visit to Bishop Faustus at Riez (*Carm.* 16. 78-88) almost certainly took place in the same period. It is quite possible that the visit to the court of Theodoric II at Toulouse (*Epist.* I. 2) occurred in one of these years, and he may well have combined it with a series of visits to friends in Bordeaux and its neighbourhood, including a stay with Pontius Leontius at Burgus, which he celebrates in *Carm.* 22. We learn from *Carm.* 22 *epist.* § 1 that he spent a considerable time at Narbonne, where Consentius and many other friends lived, in A.D. 462 or a very little later. In all probability this was the occasion on which he enjoyed the hospitality which he celebrates in *Carm.* 23. 434-506.

The murder of Theodoric, the accession of Euric

<sup>1</sup> It is commonly said that Sidonius at some time held the Praetorian Prefecture of Gaul. This idea arises from a misinterpretation of *Epist.* IV. 14. 2 and 4 and from the expression *fori iudex* in the so-called *Epitaphium Sidonii* found in the Codex Matritensis (10th or 11th century). I cordially agree with those who impugn the authority of this "epitaph" (see especially Stevens, p. 166, n. 2, and p. 211); but even if it were an authentic document one could not say that its vague language proves that Sidonius was Praetorian Prefect. *Fori iudex* was possibly suggested by *Epist.* IX. 3 v. 32, *iura gubernat*, which refers to the Prefecture of the City.

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(466), and the elevation of Anthemius to the Imperial throne (April 12, 467) have been related elsewhere.<sup>1</sup> Early in the new reign Sidonius was commissioned by the Arvernians to present to the Emperor a petition, the subject of which he does not disclose. He has described his journey in a long and interesting letter (I. 5), which was supplemented early in the following year by another (I. 9). He arrived in Rome at a time when the whole city was joyfully celebrating the marriage of Ricimer to Alypia, the daughter of Anthemius. To further the business with which he was entrusted, Sidonius attached himself to two powerful senators, Gennadius Avienus and Caecina Basilius. As the 1st of January, 468, approached, on which date Anthemius was going to assume the consulship, Basilius suggested to Sidonius that it would be profitable for him to "bring out the old Muse" and compose a panegyric. This he did, and once more he stood before a Roman throng to sing the praises of an emperor-consul. He must surely have spoken with a lump in his throat as he thought of that other New Year's Day, twelve years before, when he had stood before a similar gathering and prophesied a glorious reign for Avitus. But his facile Muse did all that was necessary, and his reward came promptly in his appointment as Prefect of the City. This preferment may have been designed to please the Gallo-Roman nobles as well as to recognise the virtues of the panegyric, but it obviously gave him great delight.<sup>2</sup> The office of Prefect of the City was still one of the most exalted in the Empire. The Prefect was President of the Senate and also head of the judicature and of the police both in Rome and

<sup>1</sup> See pp. xxvii f.

<sup>2</sup> See *Epist.* I. 9. 8.

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for a hundred miles around it. Besides this he was controller of the food-supply. This was a worrying responsibility in a period when the hostility of Geiseric might at any time cause a shortage, and we read of one occasion when Sidonius feared an outcry from the populace and anxiously awaited the arrival of five ship-loads of wheat and honey.<sup>1</sup>

He tells us no more of his prefectship, which he held for a year. We may imagine that he was glad to be freed from a rather thankless office and to leave Rome with the prestige of an ex-prefect and the honourable title of Patrician. He had another reason for preferring Gaul to Rome in the year 469, for it was then that his friend Arvandus was brought to Rome for trial on a serious charge and so conducted himself that it was impossible to save him.<sup>2</sup> Arvandus had become Praetorian Prefect of Gaul in A.D. 464, and had given such satisfaction at first that his term of office was increased to five years. But his conduct had undergone a change, and his oppression and malversation could no longer be borne. He was arrested by order of the Council of the Seven Provinces and sent to Rome for trial. Meanwhile the three delegates sent from Gaul to prosecute him were furnished with evidence which made the charge against him infinitely more serious. A letter from him to Euric had been intercepted, in which he advised the Gothic king to abandon his pacific attitude toward the "Greek Emperor" (Anthemius), to attack the Bretons, and to arrange a division of Gaul between the Goths and the Burgundians.

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* I. 10. 2.

<sup>2</sup> On the case of Arvandus see *Epist.* I. 7; also p. xxviii above.

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Sidonius was in an embarrassing position. The three accusers sent from Gaul were old friends of his, but he had also been on friendly terms with Arvandus. Along with some others he did all that was possible to help the prisoner by advising him to make no admissions and to be wary of any traps that might be set for him. Their advice was received with scorn by Arvandus, whose arrogance and self-confidence almost passed belief. Sidonius left Rome before the trial came on. Arvandus was condemned on a charge of High Treason and sentenced to death, but the sentence was commuted to one of exile.

We next find Sidonius (apparently in A.D. 469 or 470) enthroned at Clermont as Bishop of the Arverni. We do not know what immediately led to this change, but he was not the first or the last noble who abandoned the honours of state for the responsibilities of a see. There were various reasons which made such a translation desirable. The weakening power of the Empire was bitter to all who loved the Roman name. As the Imperial power declined, it was the Church above all that upheld the standard of Roman civilisation and maintained and diffused the Roman spirit amid "barbarian" surroundings. To Sidonius this must have meant much. Again, the bishop was a great refuge in time of trouble. He could aid the distressed in a very special way and stand up to the oppressor, whether Roman official or barbarian potentate. It had long been the custom to vest certain judicial powers in him. He also administered large funds, which might be used both for the relief of distresses and for the furtherance of the Catholic religion, but which too often tempted greedy intriguers to possess themselves of a diocese. In Gaul,

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Euric, a fanatical Arian, was hostile to the orthodox church, seeing in it not only the promoter of a hated creed but the fosterer of the Roman, "anti-barbarian" spirit. There was, therefore, plenty of work to challenge the zeal of a patriot who cared also for religion. In countries like Gaul it was not merely the man of piety that was required for this task. It was often not only a great advantage but a necessity to have as bishop a man of rank and wealth, a man who could face even Euric himself and command respect, and who could, through his experience as an administrator backed by his own generosity, provide the means to resist aggression and to help the ruined and homeless outcasts whose numbers were being multiplied by the excesses of friend and foe alike. Sidonius must have felt all this. At the same time he felt how ill-fitted he was for the task. A sense of his own unworthiness to be a spiritual guide oppressed him not only now but to the end. The worldly ambitions which were characteristic of his class might often be patriotic, but they were not set upon the "City of God." Moreover he was now asked to become a bishop so suddenly that any adequate preparation for his ecclesiastical duties was out of the question. In entering the Church he would be entering a world which was strange to him, and in which he would have much both to learn and to unlearn. And he was no theologian. His poem to Faustus (*Carm.* 16) shows not only an imperfect knowledge of the Scriptures but a naïve unorthodoxy which would have drawn from a less tolerant ecclesiastic a horrified rebuke. He remained a close friend both of the heretical Faustus and of Claudianus Mamertus, who dedicated to Sidonius the *De Statu*

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*Animae*, in which the views of Faustus are vigorously assailed. This impartiality does credit to his heart; at the same time it cannot be said with certainty that he really understood what the controversy was all about. Nevertheless, the poem to Faustus shows Sidonius as a devout Christian with a profound admiration for the saintly character, and there is plenty of other evidence that along with all his enthusiasm for the pomp and pageantry of power and amid all his literary preoccupation with the products of heathen mythology he retained a sense of humble dependence on a divine Providence. It is easy to be cynical and point out that the position of a bishop gave both dignity and (what offices of state did not always give) comparative safety. It must, however, be remembered that he felt both then and even later the glamour of the government service, and as far as we know he might have looked forward to further distinctions, perhaps even to the most coveted honour of all, that of the consulship. Be that as it may, we cannot deny that he was renouncing much; his domestic and social life could not be quite the same as before, his liberty was curtailed, his wealth might have to be sacrificed, and there were dangerous times ahead in Auvergne, which he cannot have failed in some measure to foresee and to fear. The insinuation of some historians that Sidonius sought the episcopal throne, and that he did so from motives of worldly prudence, is not justified either by his own words<sup>1</sup> or by intrinsic probability.

It is sometimes held that Sidonius spent some time in the lower ranks of the clergy before being installed as bishop;<sup>2</sup> but the evidence for this is not conclusive.

<sup>1</sup> See Stevens, *Sidonius Apollinaris*, p. 130, n. 2.

<sup>2</sup> See Mommsen in Luetjohann's edition, p. xlviii.

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Sometimes a layman was rushed through the lower degrees,<sup>1</sup> but in some cases even this formality was dispensed with. Sidonius took his new status very seriously. He resolved to write no more worldly verses.<sup>2</sup> This was a great renunciation for a man who had for so many years found delight in thrumming on the antique lyre. On the whole, his austere vow was kept as well as could reasonably be expected. There was indeed sterner work to be done, even apart from the ordinary duties of spiritual oversight. Auvergne, with all its ancient pride in the Roman name, was in imminent danger of going the way of other parts of Gaul and falling into the clutches of the barbarian. Romans, even members of the old governing class, were more and more inclined to acquiesce in the new order of things, and even to accept official positions under the sovereign Goth or the nominally federate Burgundian. In the parts of the country which still remained to the Empire there were traitors to the Roman name. Seronatus,<sup>3</sup> undeterred by the fate of Arvandus, freely encouraged Gothic encroachment, and did what he could to curry favour with Euric and to further his designs. He was indeed, thanks to Arvernian loyalty,

<sup>1</sup> Ambrose "passed from baptism to the episcopate in the course of a week" (C. H. Turner in *Cambridge Medieval History*, p. 152). Sidonius himself, when entrusted with the task of choosing a bishop for the see of Bourges, chose a layman: see *Epist.* VII. 9, where he reproduces the address which he delivered on the occasion. In the circumstances his choice was not an unreasonable one.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* IX. 12. 1. He speaks of verses in general, but he obviously did not mean to debar himself from writing poems with a Christian content. See also IX. 16. vv. 41-64, especially 55 f.

<sup>3</sup> *Epist.* II. 1, V. 13, VII. 7. 2.



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brought to justice and executed, but this was only a slight set-back to the sinister schemes of Euric. Sidonius soon found that the see of Clermont called for all the qualities of a man and a patriot. Unfortunately it is impossible to follow with any certainty the course of the struggle, which began probably in A.D. 471 and ended four years later with the sacrifice of Auvergne by the Empire for a transitory gain. The Goths besieged the city every year, retiring on the approach of winter after wasting the land. There were sallies and some fierce fighting, but the pressure went on relentlessly. The Burgundians had sent a garrison to help the besieged, Ecdicius, brother-in-law of Sidonius, raised a force mostly at his own expense and himself performed prodigies of valour,<sup>1</sup> and the good bishop did all that he could to animate the defenders and to relieve the distressed. That they were distressed there is no doubt. In all probability the citizens who resided outside the walls, when they had not fled to safer regions, had taken refuge within, and these, along with the Burgundians and other troops, were difficult to house as well as to feed. The Burgundians seem to have been troublesome,<sup>2</sup> and the Goths had seen to it that supplies were scarce. As things grew worse, Sidonius could not help feeling that the troubles must be a divine judgment for some unknown sin;<sup>3</sup> and indeed the people had grown slack in their public prayers.<sup>4</sup> He therefore instituted at Clermont the special prayers, or "Rogations," which Bishop Mamertus was said to have used with miraculous

<sup>1</sup> See *Epist.* III. 3. 3-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* III. 4. 1.

<sup>3</sup> *Epist.* III. 4. 2; VII. 10 (11). 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Epist.* V. 14. 2.

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effect at Vienne. But although these, as he tells us, had a good effect, circumstances were too strong; as their privations increased and no help came, the people murmured more and more, and all the efforts of their bishop could not quell the talk of surrender. At this juncture Sidonius besought the saintly priest Constantius to come from Lyons to his aid. Aged though he was, Constantius braved the rigours of a severe winter and a difficult journey to encourage the waverers, and succeeded in nerving them to further resistance.<sup>1</sup> Ecdicius seems to have been absent for a considerable time at the Burgundian court.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps he was trying to persuade the king to launch a great offensive against the Goths. The language of Sidonius is vague (he does not even say what court Ecdicius was visiting); but we must remember that his letters were revised and modified before publication and that the original wording may have been much more explicit.

In the year 474 the Quaestor Licinianus arrived in Gaul, carrying with him the patent of the patriciate, which, with the Mastership of the Forces, was now conferred upon Ecdicius. Sidonius was delighted at this,<sup>3</sup> and he reposed great hopes in the coming mission of Licinianus to the Gothic court.<sup>4</sup> We know nothing of that mission except that it gained no concession from Euric, at least as far as Auvergne was concerned. If the appointment conferred on Ecdicius was meant to convince the Goth that the Emperor Nepos was organising a formidable resistance, it failed dismally. It seems safe to say that the speedy supersession of Ecdicius, the declared enemy

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* III. 2.

<sup>2</sup> *Epist.* III. 3. 9.

<sup>3</sup> *Epist.* V. 16.

<sup>4</sup> *Epist.* III. 7. 2 sqq.

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of the Goths, by a more innocuous *magister militum* betokened a change of policy in the direction of conciliation with Euric. But the history of all these doings is so obscure that we need not dwell longer upon them. The end came in the following year (475), when Rome ceded Auvergne to the Goths in order to retain or regain<sup>1</sup> a small strip of Provence. At this betrayal of the most loyal part of Gaul after years of suffering for the Roman cause Sidonius was filled with consternation. A moving letter written to Bishop Graecus of Marseilles, who had had a hand in the drafting of the treaty,<sup>2</sup> voices his indignation and scorn. "Our slavery," he says, "is the price that has been paid for the security of others."<sup>3</sup>

Clermont was occupied by Victorius, a Roman in the Gothic service, now created Count of Auvergne. He spared the town, no doubt by order of Euric, and probably pardoned all but the most prominent of the resisters. It was impossible to ignore the uncompromising hostility of the bishop. Sidonius was confined in the fortress of Livia, near Carcassonne.<sup>4</sup> He seems to have been given some titular duties to alleviate the indignity of his imprisonment,<sup>5</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> It is just possible that the Goths had been in possession of the whole of Provence for two years and that the corner of it which included Arles was regained by the bargain of A.D. 475; see Stevens, pp. 209 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> The part played by Epiphanius and the four other bishops (Basilius of Aix, Leontius of Arles, Faustus of Riez, Graecus of Marseilles) in the making of the treaty is a vexed question. See Stevens, pp. 207-209.

<sup>3</sup> *Epist.* VII. 7.

<sup>4</sup> Liviana, according to the Peutinger Table; Sidonius speaks only of *moenia Liviana*. It has been identified with the modern Capendu.

<sup>5</sup> *Epist.* IX. 3. 3 *per officii imaginem solo patrio exactus*.

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although he complained bitterly of his lot, he does not seem to have been badly treated. He had a friend at the Gothic court, Leo of Narbonne,<sup>1</sup> who was now a trusted minister of Euric, discharging duties similar to those discharged for the Roman Emperor by the *quaestor sacri palatii*.<sup>2</sup> Leo asked him to transcribe the life of Apollonius of Tyana by Philostratus, probably wishing to give him a task which would take his mind off his troubles. When this was completed and sent to Leo Sidonius had already won his freedom through the good offices of his friend (possibly before the end of the year 476). His movements after his release are not entirely clear. It seems certain that he was not allowed to return to Clermont immediately.<sup>3</sup> Sooner or later he went to Bordeaux, and eventually he appeared as a suppliant at the court of Euric.<sup>4</sup> Two months passed without an answer to his suit.<sup>5</sup> At this point he sent to his friend Lampridius,<sup>6</sup> who enjoyed the favour of the Gothic king, a letter containing a poem of 59 hendecasyllabic lines, in which he not only makes reference to his own plight but draws an impressive picture of the Gothic court, crowded with embassies from near and far—even from distant Persia—all anxious to win the gracious favour of the

<sup>1</sup> See note on *Carm.* 9. 314.

<sup>2</sup> On this office see note on *Carm.* 1. 25. In *Epist.* VIII. 3. 3 Leo is described as the king's mouthpiece.

<sup>3</sup> *Epist.* VIII. 9. 3, *ago adhuc exulem*.

<sup>4</sup> *Epist.* VIII. 9. Sidonius does not say definitely that the court was then at Bordeaux. It is possible that he had gone on from Bordeaux to Toulouse, the Gothic capital.

<sup>5</sup> Perhaps he had already had one audience; *semel visos*, *Epist.* VIII. 9. 5. v. 17, is obscure, but may mean this.

<sup>6</sup> See note on *Carm.* 9. 314.

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mighty Euric.<sup>1</sup> It is almost certain that he wished this poem to be brought to the notice of the king.<sup>2</sup> Whatever its effect may have been, it is certain that Sidonius was eventually allowed to return to Clermont and to resume his duties as bishop.

The events of the past few years had left their mark upon him. Truer to the traditions of his class than most of his friends had been, he had clung wistfully, hoping against hope, to his faith in the Empire. Even as late as the year 474 he regarded the consulship as a dazzling prize.<sup>3</sup> He had indeed come to see that worldly ambition is not everything, and he maintained in his later years that the humblest of God's ministers held a rank more exalted than the highest dignities of state.<sup>4</sup> But in his eyes the two views were not inconsistent. Church and State were merged in the great unity of Romanism. To maintain the Catholic faith against Arianism and to maintain the Roman civilisation against barbarism—these were sacred duties bound up with the heritage into which he had been born. The sense of that heritage was strong in Sidonius. As a Gallo-Roman noble he had been cradled and nurtured in the traditions of the past, and it was a matter of pride as well as of conviction to uphold them. The whole ten-

<sup>1</sup> Mommsen has some interesting pages on this poem: *Reden u. Aufsätze*, pp. 136 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> It is absurd to suppose that Euric was ignorant of Latin. It is true that he used an interpreter when dealing with Epiphanius (Ennod., *Vit. Epiph.* 90); but that need not mean more than that he did not feel quite capable of dealing with the highly polished language of the Roman envoy; see Roger, *op. cit.*, p. 58. We need not, of course, assume that he personally read the poem of Sidonius, but if he did, he probably understood its general drift.

<sup>3</sup> *Epist.* V. 16. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Epist.* VII. 12. 4.

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dency of his education had been to turn his gaze backward. The literature and the history of bygone days were his inspiration, and he could not imagine any culture worth having which was not drawn from that all-sufficient source. Deep down in his heart was the vision of the Empire, a spiritual as well as a material force, appointed from of old to guard all that was most precious. In that last struggle of the Arvernians the heroic bishop was fighting for this idealised Rome, majestic even in her day of humiliation. Amid all the despair of those times there had lurked a hope that somehow the Empire might arise from its ashes and assert itself. But such self-deception could continue no longer. He had to realise that now, for better or worse, the "barbarian" kings were the inheritors of the Empire in the West. Perhaps, as he surveyed the scene at Euric's court, even he dimly perceived that the change now going on was "not so much the Germanisation of the Romans as the Romanisation of the Germans."<sup>1</sup> Rome was not a spent force, even in the West. But for Sidonius the revulsion was too violent. Although the pictures sometimes drawn of his despair after his return to Clermont have been exaggerated through misunderstanding of his Latin combined with arbitrary dating of his letters, there can be little doubt that the shattering of his hopes and ideals told heavily upon him. But he did not break down utterly. He had many friends who did what they could to cheer him. The preparation of his letters for publication helped to divert him, though it must have given him many a pang by calling up memories of other days. Above all there were his episcopal

<sup>1</sup> Mommsen, *Reden u. Aufsätze*, p. 139.

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duties. All the evidence goes to show that he was loved and trusted by his flock, that he took a helpful interest in their various concerns, and that he was assiduous in the performance of his ecclesiastical functions.<sup>1</sup> The governor, Count Victorius, who was a Catholic, showed himself helpful and sympathetic—but alas! only for a time. One would like to think that Sidonius did not live to see the change which happened. It is just possible that he was spared the distress which his son brought upon his house.<sup>2</sup> We do not know the year of his death; A.D. 479 seems the earliest date to which it can be assigned, but a somewhat later date seems probable.<sup>3</sup> He was canonised, and in Clermont his feast is still celebrated on the 21st of August.

Sidonius is one of the many writers who “lisped in numbers, for the numbers came.” He wrote poetry from early years,<sup>4</sup> and some of it was circulated among his friends, but there is no evidence that any of it was published before the collection still extant appeared. That collection falls into two parts, which were probably published separately but subsequently combined. The first part consists of the

<sup>1</sup> For the conduct of Sidonius as bishop see Chaix, Vol. II, Stevens, c. VII. The present volume does not contain any of the letters written by Sidonius as bishop; these begin in Book III.

<sup>2</sup> See p. xxxvi, n. 2.

<sup>3</sup> Mommsen supports 479, and is followed by Duchesne and Stein. This dating, however, depends too much on an arbitrary handling of the worthless “epitaph” (see p. xxxix, n. 1). Aprunculus, the successor of Sidonius in the see, died in A.D. 490, but the date of his installation is unknown. The last letter of Sidonius is assigned to A.D. 479 or 480; see, however, p. lix, n. 2.

<sup>4</sup> *Carm.* 9. 9 sq.; *Epist.* V. 21, IX. 16. 3 vv. 41 sqq.

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panegyrics mentioned above, which occur in reverse order,<sup>1</sup> together with prefaces and dedications. The second professedly consists of youthful poems. The panegyrics are constructed on the formal lines laid down by the rhetoricians and hitherto carried out most thoroughly in poetry by Claudian. Sidonius observes all the pitiable conventions of the *genre*, and succeeds in writing three "poems" which for prolonged insipidity, absurdity, and futility would be hard to beat. It is often very difficult to see what he means—all the more difficult because he so frequently means very little. It is true that he occasionally brings forth a striking epigram—all the Latin poets could do that,—but these are by no means always as new as some of their admirers seem to think. A tenacious memory has given him plenty of material to steal from his predecessors. If imitation is the sincerest flattery, never—not even by Silius Italicus—were previous writers honoured with a more thorough-going adulation. But the imitation does not go beneath the surface. Some of it is merely mechanical. The old mythological machinery is made to work overtime; its figures are now rusty, creaking puppets, but he dresses them up in garish tinsel and spangles and makes them present a ludicrous caricature of their old-time splendour. It is pathetic to think that such mouldy antiquarianism was considered a worthy tribute to the master of the

<sup>1</sup> If this order is due to Sidonius himself, he may have desired to put the recently delivered panegyric on Anthemius in the place of honour as a compliment to the Emperor: but this is doubtful. Klotz points out that the order of the prose *Panegyrici Latini* is similarly reversed, except that Pliny, the model of them all, is naturally put first.



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Roman world. The thought, when there is any worth speaking of, is thin, or at least unoriginal. The great object is not to think noble thoughts but to coin clever phrases. The ancients are ransacked for suggestions of all kinds, but their features are disguised by all the virtuosity of the schools, verbal jingles and bad puns, forced contrasts, unnatural use of words, straining after "point" in season and out of season. It cannot be said that any one of these faults was new; but in Sidonius they occur with such devastating frequency and with such grotesque exaggeration that the reader is often driven to distraction. The English language is quite incapable of reproducing all the oddities of these poems. The consequence is that, however feeble the translator, they must needs seem more tolerable in his version than in the original. Having said all this—and one could easily say a great deal more to the same effect—one feels bound to admit that there are a few places where the author deviates into sense, and even into real feeling not ineptly expressed, as when he exposes the sorrows of Lyons in the panegyric on Majorian or the character and prowess of the Arvernians in the panegyric on Avitus. There are also some descriptive touches and sentimental outbursts which suggest that the poet might have been more worthy of his calling if he had lived in an age of less depraved taste. But even these better morsels are soon spoilt by some bizarre absurdity. The chief value of the panegyrics--apart from the light which they incidentally throw on the literary training and ideals of the fifth century--lies in their historical information, which is of considerable importance.

The second part of the poems (*Carm.* 9-21) was  
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dedicated to Felix.<sup>1</sup> The dedicatory poem is a most extraordinary production. It is 346 lines long and consists mostly of a list (with various embellishments) of the subjects (mostly mythological) which he is not going to treat and the writers whose themes or style he is not going to reproduce. The other poems are of various kinds. Some are in hexameters, the others are in elegiacs or hendecasyllables. There are a few epigrams, not unpleasing, especially nos. 12 and 17. No. 13 is the poem already mentioned in which he beseeches Majorian to remit the tax. Of the two *epithalamia* (nos. 11 and 15), each of considerable length, the best that can be said is that they are not the only absurd experiments in that conventional form to be found in European literature. The first one, with its tortuous conceits, is a nerve-racking problem for the would-be interpreter; in the second one Sidonius, after parading unblushingly his

<sup>1</sup> Sidonius tells us that Felix had asked him to gather together in a book the "trifles" which he had written and circulated in his younger days (*Carm.* 9. 9-11). In *vv.* 318 ff. he says that he rarely commits such efforts to the permanent medium of a papyrus-sheet, and when he does so the sheet is always a short one (not a roll); in other words, those "measures of his barren Muse" (*v.* 318) are not, as a rule, carefully preserved, and they are always short. This passage has often been misunderstood. Some authorities, ignoring *ruræ*, take the passage to mean "I am entrusting these poems (for publication) to a short roll," and infer that the long poems 22 and 23 cannot have been included in the original collection, but were added in a second edition. The fact is, in all probability, that 22 and 23 were specially written for inclusion in the published collection, and when Sidonius speaks about his *brevi charta* he is thinking of the more youthful poems which form the main body of the book: indeed the two longer poems may possibly not have been written at the time when he wrote the prefatory poem to Felix.

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ignorance of philosophy and astronomy, shows one or two genial traits which the jaded reader will scarcely appreciate. It is rather inappropriately followed by a very pious poem to Bishop Faustus. The description of Jonah in the whale's belly (vv. 25-30) is a striking instance of the poet's uncanny powers. It is, unfortunately, quite possible that Faustus and some other contemporaries admired its ingenuity. But the poem is not all as bad as that part. Although Sidonius can never wholly rid himself of his mannerisms, the second half (and indeed some of the earlier parts also) does at least suggest some sincere feeling, and the parts dealing with Lérins and Riez have an interest of their own. No. 22 is a very showy and obscure description of the "Burgus" of Pontius Leontius. Sidonius has no idea that the reader of what purports to be a description of a house might desire to learn what the house was really like rather than what the author could achieve as a verbal trickster. There is also the inevitable parade of gods and other mythological figures. *Hic multus tu, frater, eris* (v. 220; see note *ad loc.*) is, unfortunately, the best thing in this poem of 235 lines. No. 23 is a *tour de force*, 512 hendecasyllabics addressed to his friend Consentius of Narbonne. Though it has a fair share of the usual faults, it shows some skill and is probably the most interesting of all the longer poems. The description of the battered city, recently occupied by Theodoric, has a certain effectiveness. The praise of Theodoric may profitably be compared with *Epist.* I. 2. Pantomimic performances, which obviously enjoyed a considerable vogue even in those Christian times, are described in a notable passage. The picture of the chariot-

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race is a wonderfully vigorous effort, based on Statius ; unfortunately it is marred by some obscurity in the climax. The last part of the poem gives an interesting and valuable picture of the social life enjoyed by the Gallo-Roman nobles. The collection ends with an epilogue speeding the book on its way from the author to friends in different parts of the country.

Poem 22 (see the prefatory letter, § 1) was written not long after the occupation of Narbonne by Theodoric in A.D. 462. Probably the visit to Narbonne there mentioned is the same as the one mentioned in no. 23, which must in any case have been written not earlier than the year 462 and not later than 466 (the date of Theodoric's death). If these two poems were specially written for inclusion in the published edition (see p. lv, n. 1), we may plausibly assign the publication of poems 9-24 approximately to A.D. 463. The panegyrics must, of course, have been published after the delivery of the panegyric to Anthemius in the year 468. It is customary to assign them to 469. The letters also contain a number of poems. Several of them, in accordance with the stern resolution which Sidonius took on obtaining his bishopric, are of a religious cast, but these, with the exception of the poem in IX. 16. 3, are all very short. It may be of some interest, as the statements made on the subject are generally rather vague, to examine the letters with the object of discovering how seriously Sidonius took his vow to keep the old pagan Muse in check. Book II contains an inscription for the church built by Bishop Patiens at Lyons (II. 10. 4) and also an epitaph (II. 8. 3), which has no Christian content ; but as the

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letters in this book seem all to have been written before his episcopate, they are not relevant to our enquiry. Apart from these, there are five poems in the first seven books. Three of these, all with a Christian tone (IV. 11. 6, a lament for Claudianus Mamertus, IV. 18. 5, an inscription for the rebuilt church of St. Martin at Tours, and VII. 17. 2, an epitaph on the monk Abraham), may be assigned to the period of his bishopric, but the other two (III. 12. 5, a Christian epitaph on his grandfather, and IV. 8. 5, a trivial inscription for a drinking-cup) cannot be assigned to the same time with any probability. Thus the complete collection of his letters as originally planned contains no evidence of "pagan" poetry written by Sidonius after becoming bishop. The first of the two supplementary books contains the poem already mentioned describing Euric's court (VIII. 9. 5);<sup>1</sup> it has no trace of Christian influence. In the same book (VIII. 11. 3) Sidonius quotes a poem written in his old style which certainly belongs to his pre-episcopal days. So far he has only once broken his vow, and that one breach is so venial that it can scarcely be counted against him. Book IX is interesting. In the 12th letter, written "three Olympiads," i.e. 12 years, after his entry into holy orders (§ 2), he tells Oresius of the vow he had made on entering the ranks of the clergy to give up his old habit of versifying. This letter is placed, surely of set purpose, immediately before one written several years later, which contains a breach of his rule. Then, after a kindly letter to a young man with literary ambitions, there comes another in which his rule is broken. Next there comes, in the

<sup>1</sup> See pp. xlix sq.

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last letter of all, a sort of palinode in verse, in which, after sketching his secular career and mentioning the honorary statue which his poetry had brought him, he speaks in penitent tones of his early verses and registers a vow no more to indulge in verse-writing, unless it be to celebrate the holy martyrs.<sup>1</sup> The way in which these last few letters expose his lapse from grace is as good as a sermon. Oresius had asked him for a poem (*Epist.* 12). After explaining that he had renounced such frivolities Sidonius promises to see if he can find any old compositions to satisfy his friend. Nothing of the kind is given in the letter. In the next letter (IX. 13) we find that Tonantius has asked him for a poem in Asclepiads which he might recite at a dinner-party. Sidonius with some show of diffidence sends him 28 Asclepiad verses in which he protests that he cannot now fitly satisfy such a request. This is a small lapse, but the mischief has been done; the memory of his happy days in the Muses' company comes upon him and he goes on to quote a poem of 120 lines which he had composed at a dinner-party in the reign of Majorian.<sup>2</sup> In letter 15 he relapses more completely into the bad old ways. Gelasius has heard of the verses written to Tonantius and wants some for himself. Sidonius

<sup>1</sup> No doubt in imitation of Prudentius. So far as is known he never carried out this ambition.

<sup>2</sup> In § 6 Sidonius says that this poem has been lying in a book-box for about 20 years. Most authorities think that the dinner-party must have occurred at Arles in 461, like the one described in *Epist.* I. 11. In that case 481 is an approximate date for the letter to Tonantius; even if we make allowance for the vagueness of "about 20" we can scarcely make it earlier than 479, the year in which many persons would place the death of Sidonius. Mr. Stevens, however (p. 51), would assign the dinner party to the year 459.

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composes a poem specially for him, 55 lines praising contemporary writers, and at the end he hints that he might be induced to write some more poetry for his friend. Then comes the great renunciation in the last letter of the book. Thus we find that the poem to Euric, which is scarcely to be counted, the very short poem in *Epist.* IX. 13, and the longer one in no. 15 are the only breaches of his self-denying rule, as far as one can gather from his correspondence. It is a very creditable record.

It is not known in what year Sidonius began to prepare his letters for publication; A.D. 469 is as likely a date as any.<sup>1</sup> The idea was suggested by his friend Constantius of Lyons, to whom the work was dedicated in the introductory letter. It is certain that the collection was published in instalments, and not improbable that each book was published

<sup>1</sup> This date was suggested by Mommsen. At first sight it conflicts with *Epist.* I. 1. 4, in which Sidonius says that he has a long-established reputation as a poet. But in the first place there can be no doubt that copies of the panegyrics were circulated very soon after these poems were recited (*Carm.* VIII, which accompanied a copy of the panegyric on Avitus sent to Priscus Valerianus, says, of course with some exaggeration, that the applause which greeted the poem is still echoing through Rome); in the second place, it is quite likely that *Carmina* 9-24 were first published about A.D. 463; see p. lvii. Again, those who would put the publication of the first book of the letters after the restoration of Sidonius to the see of Clermont (i.e. about A.D. 477) forget that his attitude to his secular poetry had then changed, and he would scarcely have spoken of it with the self-satisfaction which he betrays in *Epist.* I. 1. 4. But the question cannot be definitely settled. As it is incredible that any book of the letters was published during the siege of Clermont, Book III, which mentions the siege, must be assigned to a subsequent date.

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separately.<sup>1</sup> The last letter of Book VII is an epilogue addressed to Constantius. There the work was meant to end. But the letters had aroused much interest; there was a demand for a supplement, and more and more friends wished to be represented in the collection by letters addressed to them. At the instance of Petronius he added an eighth book.<sup>2</sup> In the last letter of this book, which is, like the epilogue of Book VII, addressed to Constantius, he says that he has now no letters left which are worth publication, but he gives a broad hint that with a little more time he might work up a few, and that a ninth book is not an impossibility. Firminus urged him to produce another book, pleading that Pliny had written nine books.<sup>3</sup> Sidonius complied, and added a book of sixteen letters which are by no means the least interesting in the collection. With that volume the published correspondence closes.

Sidonius revised his old letters for publication and added several specially written for inclusion in the collection. His chief model is Pliny,<sup>4</sup> though Symmachus also had a great influence on him, especially

<sup>1</sup> The evidence on this head, which is rather complicated, will be best considered in the commentary as the passages bearing upon it occur; it may, however, be pointed out here that it is wrong to cite *Epist.* I. 1. 1 as evidence that Book I was published separately. There Sidonius agrees to a request to include in one "volumen" all his letters that merit publication. *Volumen* must therefore mean "book" in the sense of a complete work (a meaning for which there is excellent authority). Those who take it as "book" in the sense of a division of a larger work ignore the word *omnes*.

<sup>2</sup> See VIII. 1. For Petronius see note on I. 7. 4.

<sup>3</sup> IX. 1. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Epist.* IV. 22. 2; *ego Plinio ut discipulus assurgo*.



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in the later books.<sup>1</sup> The mere fact that nearly every letter has only a single theme is, as in the case of Pliny, a sure sign that they were considerably modified; real letters to friends are not generally so limited.<sup>2</sup> Much that we should have liked to know about the age and its personalities must have been pruned away. Many of the letters are simply miniature panegyrics; derogatory remarks are much rarer than one would expect them to be in the genuine familiar correspondence of an average human being. The many letters to bishops assume a very humble, sometimes abject, tone. Nearly every letter is assiduously worked up according to the principles of contemporary rhetorical teaching. It is impossible here to give any adequate idea of the ostentatious combination of stylistic elaboration with sesquipedalian verbiage, Frontonian archaisms, weird neologisms, and verbal jingles which makes the correspondence such a nerve-wracking conglomeration. But it would be a mistake to regard the style and diction of Sidonius as something new and without precedent. He was in the main only carrying out with misguided zeal and a conspicuous lack of taste the principles which had been taught in the schools of rhetoric for centuries. These principles were often sound enough, and might be helpful to people who really had something to say, but even as the young men in Quintilian's time had seized on

<sup>1</sup> There are some signs of the influence of Cicero, *Ad Fam.* The more homely and informal style of the letters to Atticus can scarcely have appealed to him.

<sup>2</sup> An interesting exception is the reference to the unstudious habits of his son Apollinaris in *Epist.* IX. 1. 5; but we may be sure that this is inserted in imitation of Cicero's words about young Marcus.

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Seneca's *dulcia vitia*<sup>1</sup> for imitation and ignored the qualities which made him a great writer, so also after his time the young students and, too often, their professors as well, were inclined to regard composition as a field for the exploitation of specious "tricks of the trade," which became ends in themselves and were developed in the most fantastic manner. This tendency increased as time went on. Sidonius was not an original genius: he was a conscious artist working with traditional materials and seeking only to exploit to the uttermost limit all the "tips" which he had derived from the mechanical teaching of the schools and from his reading of earlier writers. The result is a *reductio ad absurdum* of all the resources of rhetoric and a travesty of the Latin language. But although he had detractors, most of his educated contemporaries seem to have admired him. So many *recherché* effects had never before been found concentrated in such small space. If he took liberties with the meaning of words, that only increased the dazzling glamour of it all. If he was obscure—well, anyhow it was great art, great art, my masters! It is pathetic to find Ruricius humbly trying to imitate him though compelled to admit that he did not understand him.<sup>2</sup> One may be sure that in preparing the letters for publication Sidonius elaborated and multiplied their mystifying artifices; but most of them must have been rather terrible even in their original form. There are some cases where he writes more simply, but his manner never completely leaves him.

Sidonius, imitating Pliny, arranges his letters with-

<sup>1</sup> Quintilian X. 1. 129.

<sup>2</sup> Ruric., *Epist.* II. 26. 3.

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out regard to chronological order, though all the letters contained in Books I and II seem to have been originally written before his election to the bishopric. There are some signs of intentional grouping. The whole of Book VI and the first eleven letters of Book VII are addressed to bishops; the same is true of letters 13-15 in Book VIII and 2-4 in Book IX. In the latter part of Book IX, as we have seen, the letters seem to be arranged according to a set plan. The collection includes a letter from Claudianus Mamertus (IV. 2), which is followed by the reply of Sidonius. There is one letter to Papianilla; all the other recipients are men. Not many people are honoured by more than one letter, as the number of persons anxious to have their names perpetuated by inclusion in the correspondence was very large and Sidonius was anxious to oblige them.

Whatever one may think about their style and diction, the letters of Sidonius are an invaluable source of information on many aspects of the life of his time. It is true that one is often tempted to sigh for information which he withholds and to upbraid him for telling us so little when he might have told so much. The appetising lists sometimes drawn up of subjects on which he might well have thrown light make one's mouth water.<sup>1</sup> But he did not set out to write a history, and he was unfitted for such a task.<sup>2</sup> His views were limited. It is doubtful if he really thought or cared much about the social evils and distresses of his day until he was brought into contact

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders*, II. pp. 372 f.

<sup>2</sup> On his conscious unfitness for historical writing, see below, p. lxyi.

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with them as a bishop; and even then perhaps he only partially realised them. For a good part of his life his horizon was bounded by the pride and prejudices of his class; indeed his aristocratic pride sometimes breaks out rather ludicrously even in his later years. He was not a deep thinker, but he was a keen observer of external details. Many of his descriptions, in spite of their pretentious language, are both vivid and picturesque. From his pages we gather much knowledge of the lives led by the Gallo-Roman nobility as the Empire in the West tottered to its fall. Its pleasures, its good-fellowship, its ambitions, and sometimes its lack of ambition, its often narrow and pedantic but not unwholesome interests, its apparent indifference to many of the most terrible things going on around it, all pass before our eyes. We find also some valuable pictures of the "barbarians" who were taking over the Roman heritage. Here and there we get pleasing sidelights on the lives of great clerics, and we are helped to realise the power, mostly beneficent, wielded by the great Gallic bishops and priests in those troubled times. For these and many other glimpses we may well be grateful. As for Sidonius himself, when one has recovered from the exhaustion caused by wrestling with his showy pedantry one cannot repress a liking for him. Amid all his prejudices, his time-serving pliability at certain junctures, his excessive pride in his lineage and his ill-disguised literary vanity, one can discern a sympathetic nature and a simple goodness of heart. He accepted great responsibilities at a testing time and rose nobly to the occasion. He walked humbly before God, and all his pride fell from him as he contemplated his unfitness for his high

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calling. Though strictly orthodox he is untouched by the bitterness which so often showed itself in the religious controversies of the day. He abhors the religion of the Jews, but he can admire a Jew as a man, and he dares to say so.<sup>1</sup> No one without goodness and charm could have had such a circle of devoted friends as he had. He could write in all sincerity to Bishop Faustus: "Thanks be to God, not even my enemies can charge me with half-hearted friendship" (*Epist.* IX. 9. 5).

Besides his poems and letters Sidonius wrote a number of short speeches or addresses (called by him *contestatiunculae*), a copy of which he sent to Bishop Megethius (*Epist.* VIII. 3). It is not certain that he published them. Gregory of Tours (*Hist. Fr.* II. 22) refers to masses (*missae*) composed by him. He was urged to write on the war with Attila and especially on the siege of Orléans and the wonderful achievements of its bishop, Anianus. He found such a large task too exacting, but promised to celebrate the glories of Anianus (*Epist.* VIII. 15). There is no evidence that this projected work was ever written. He declined to write a historical work which Leo had suggested to him (*Epist.* IV. 22). He did not translate the life of Apollonius of Tyana, as is often said, but merely transcribed it (see p. xlix). He wrote many poems besides those which have come down to us, but it is not certain that he published any collection of them.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Epist.* III. 4. 1; cf. VI. 11. 1.

<sup>2</sup> In *Epist.* II. 8. 2, before quoting the epitaph on Philomathia, he says to Desideratus: *quam* (sc. *neniam*) *si non satis improbas, ceteris epigrammatum meorum voluminibus applicandam mercennarius bybliopola suscipiet.* *Ceteris* is loosely

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The numerous manuscripts of Sidonius seem all to be derived from a single archetype of no great antiquity. They suffer from extensive dislocations, interpolations, corruptions, "corrections" and lacunae, but as they can very often be successfully used to check one another a text in the main satisfactory can be evolved from them. It is difficult to construct a convincing *stemma codicum*,<sup>1</sup> but we may divide the MSS. into four classes on the basis of certain dislocations and of differences in their contents. I have added to the MSS. most used by Luet-

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used: he means "the existing books (or perhaps 'rolls') of my epigrams." It is probably a case of "transferred epithet"; *ceterorum* would have been more logical: "the books containing my other epigrams."

Klotz (in Pauly-Wissowa, *R.-E.*, s.v. *Sidonius*) understands *epigrammata* to mean "small poems," hence "trifling verses" (*nugae*). He takes the reference to be to the extant *Carmina*. This view may well be correct, although there does not seem to be any passage in Sidonius where the word *epigramma* must necessarily have such an extended meaning. It generally means a short poem; see especially *Carm.* 22 *epist.* § 6, where *paucitas* is mentioned as characteristic of an *epigramma*; cf. *Epist.* IV. 8. 4, IX. 13. 2 v. 16, IX. 14. 6. The extended meaning may be present in *Epist.* IX. 12. 3, IX. 13. 5 (where there is a competition in the production of *epigrammata* and Sidonius composes a poem of 120 lines), and IX. 16 v. 56. It is certainly found in Alcimus Avitus, who humbly speaks of a quite lengthy poem as an *epigramma*; see especially *Poem.* VI. prol. (p. 274 v. 7, Peiper). The source of this use is probably Pliny, *Epist.* IV. 14. 9.

<sup>1</sup> The *stemma* of Leo (in Luetjohann's edition, p. xli) perhaps comes as near to the truth as it is possible to get. It is repeated with the addition of the codices N and R by M. C. Burke, *De Apollinaris Sidonii codice nondum tractato*, Munich, 1911.

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johann and Mohr the codex R.<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to mention all the codices.

Class I. (containing all the writings in the proper order, except that in *Epist.* IX letters 6 and 7 are put after 9).

C. *Matritensis* Ee 102 (formerly at Cluni), Madrid. X-XI cent. Much interpolated. Akin to this MS. is Vaticanus 3421. X cent.

Class II. (All with disturbance in the order of the letters in Books VI and VII; some contain all the works, some *Epist.* alone, some *Epist.* and some poems).

F. *Parisinus* 9551. XII cent.

Class III. Intermediate between I and II.

P. *Parisinus* 2781. X-XI cent.

Class IV. (a superior class, but with large lacunae. Some contain only *Epist.*)

T. *Laurentianus* plut. XLV. 23, Florence. XI-XII cent.

M. *Marcianus* 554, Florence. X cent. (*Epist.* and *Carm.* I-VIII.)

L. *Laudianus* lat. 104, Oxford. *Epist.* only. IX cent. The best MS.

N. *Parisinus* 18584. *Epist.* only. X cent. Closely akin to L, but with more lacunae and numerous "corrections."

V. *Vaticanus* 1783. *Epist.* only. X cent. Mutilated at the beginning and in the middle.

<sup>1</sup> See note 1, p. lxvii. Dr. M. Tyson has kindly ascertained for me that this Rheims codex has safely survived the Great War. My knowledge of its readings is derived entirely from Burke's pamphlet.

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R. *Remensis* 413, Rheims. *Epist.* only. IX-X cent. Closely akin to V. V and R. are less closely related to L than N is.

The fullest account of variant readings is given in Luetjohann's edition. Mohr gives a shorter but very useful *apparatus criticus*.

The following is a short list of works useful to the student of Sidonius. An excellent and, on the historical side, much more comprehensive bibliography will be found in the work of Stevens mentioned below, pp. 216-220.

### TEXT: CRITICAL EDITIONS.

*Gai Sollii Apollinaris Sidonii epistulae et carmina.* Recens. et emend. C. Luetjohann. (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica* Auct. Antiquiss., VIII). Berolini, MDCCCLXXXVII. On the death of Luetjohann the editing was completed by Mommsen and Leo, with the assistance of U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff and Buecheler. Mommsen added a life of Sidonius and very useful indices of persons and places. An index of words and linguistic usages, helpful as far as it goes, was compiled by E. Grupe, and a list of parallel passages by E. Geisler. Interesting information about this edition will be found in *Mommsen und Wilamowitz: Briefwechsel*, Berlin, 1935 (numerous letters: see the index to the vol. s.v. Sidonius).

*C. Sollius Apollinaris Sidonius.* Recens. P. Mohr. Lipsiae, MDCCCLXXXV.



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### TEXT WITH COMMENTARY.

*Caii Sollii Apollinaris Sidonii opera.* Io. Savaro recog. et librum commentarium adiecit. II. editio auctior et emendatior. Parisiis, MDCIX.

Ill-digested learning, with much irrelevance, but useful in several places.

*C. Sol. Apollin. Sidonii opera,* Iac. Sirmondi cura et studio recognita notisque illustrata. Editio secunda. Parisiis, MDCLII.

A masterpiece, invaluable for its notes on subject-matter: the only pity is that they are not more numerous. The commentary is reprinted in Migne's *Patrologia Latina*, LVIII.

There are some useful notes in the edition with French translation by Grégoire and Collombet, 3 vols., Lyon-Paris, 1836, but as the text is antiquated and the translation contemptible, the work is of no great value.

### TRANSLATIONS.

Sidonius has very seldom been translated into any language. The only rendering worth mention is a translation into English of the letters alone by O. M. Dalton, 2 vols., Oxford, 1915. This translation, though it does not profess to follow the Latin closely, has been justly welcomed by students of Sidonius. It is accompanied by a valuable introduction and some helpful notes. Besides the effort of Grégoire and Collombet, mentioned above, there is another French translation (not markedly superior) by Baret in Nisard's *Collection des auteurs latins* (with text: lxx.

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along with Ausonius and Venantius Fortunatus), Paris, 1887.

### LIFE AND WORKS OF SIDONIUS.

Chaix, L. -A. *Saint Sidoine Apollinaire et son siècle*. 2 vols. Clermont-Ferrand, 1866.

Uncritical, but of considerable value.

Fertig, M. *Cajus Sollius Apollinaris Sidonius u. seine Zeit, nach seinen Werken dargestellt*. 3 parts. Würzburg, 1845-6, Passau, 1848.

Germain, A. *Essai littéraire et historique sur Apollinaris Sidonius*. Paris, 1840.

Kaufmann, G. *Die Werke des Cajus Sollius Apollinaris Sidonius als eine Quelle für die Geschichte seiner Zeit*. Göttingen, 1864.

Mommsen, T. *Apollinaris Sidonius u. seine Zeit*. In *Reden u. Aufsätze*, Berlin, 1905 etc.

Also in Luetjohann's edition; see above.

Stevens, C. E. *Sidonius Apollinaris and his Age*. Oxford, 1933.

A stimulating and valuable work, to which every reader must feel much indebted, even if he cannot everywhere agree with the author.

There are useful articles on Sidonius in the Herzog-Hauck *Realencyclopädie für protestantische Theologie und Kirche* (by Arnold), the Pauly-Wissowa *Realencycl. d. klass. Altertumswissenschaft* (by Klotz), the histories of Latin Literature by Teuffel (vol. 3, 6th ed. by Kroll and Skutsch) and Schanz-Hosius-Krüger (IV. 2); also in Ebert's *Allgemeine Gesch. d. Litteratur d. Mittelalters im Abendlande*, 2nd ed., vol. I, pp. 419-448.

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### HISTORY AND CIVILISATION OF THE FIFTH CENTURY.

Bury, J. B. *History of the later Roman Empire*. Vol. I, London, 1923.

Cambridge Medieval History. Vol. I. 2nd ed., Cambridge, 1924.

Dill, S. *Roman Society in the last Century of the Western Empire*. 2nd ed., Lond., 1899, etc.

A very readable and illuminating work, with some excellent pages on Sidonius and his times.

Duchesne, L. *Early History of the Christian Church*, Vol. III. Translated by C. Jenkins. London, 1924.

Fauriel, C. *Histoire de la Gaule méridionale sous les conquérants germains*. Vol. I, Paris, 1836.

Gibbon. *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, cc. 35 and 36 (in vols. III and IV of Bury's edition, Lond., 1909).

This part scarcely shows Gibbon at his best.

Hodgkin, T. *Italy and her Invaders*. Vols. I and (especially) II. 2nd ed., Lond., 1892.

Marked by good sense and an absence of the vagueness and evasiveness too often found in historical works on the fifth century.

Roger, M. *L'enseignement des lettres classiques d'Ausone à Alcuin*. Paris, 1910.

Seeck, O. *Geschichte d. Untergangs d. Antiken Welt*. Vol. VI. Stuttgart, 1920. Also articles in Pauly-Wissowa, *R.-E.*, on various personages, e.g. Avitus, Anthemius, Euric.

Seeck's work is valuable, but prejudiced and often unreliable.

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Stein, E. *Geschichte d. spätrömischen Reiches*.  
I Band. Vienna, 1928.

A very able and important work, though one may not always agree with it.

Sundwall, J. *Weströmische Studien*. Berlin, 1915.

With a valuable prosopography of the fifth century.

### THE LANGUAGE OF SIDONIUS.

No comprehensive treatment of this subject exists. Besides Grupe's contribution to Luetjohann's edition the following pamphlets may be mentioned :

Engelbrecht, A. *Untersuchungen über die Sprache des Claudianus Mamertus*. Vienna, 1885.

Grupe, E. *Zur Sprache d. Apoll. Sidonius*. Zabern, 1892.

Stresses the influence of legal language on the vocabulary of Sidonius.

Kretschmann, H. *De latinitate C. Sollii Apoll. Sidonii*. 2 parts. Memel, 1870, 1872.

Mohr, P. *Zu Apoll. Sidonius*. Bremerhaven, 1886.

Müller, M. *De Apoll. Sidonii latinitate*. Halle, 1888.

### MISCELLANEOUS.

Bitschofsky, R. *De C. Sollii Apoll. Sidonii studiis Statianis*. Vienna, 1881.

Brakman, G. *Sidoniana et Boethiana*. Utrecht, 1904.

Geisler, E. *De Apoll. Sidonii studiis*. Breslau, 1885.

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- Holland, R. *Studia Sidoniana*. Leipzig, 1905.
- Kraemer, M. *Res libraria cadentis antiquitatis  
Ausonii et Apoll. Sidonii exemplis illustrata*.  
Marburg, 1909.
- Schuster, M. *De C. Sollii Apoll. Sidonii imitationi-  
bus studiisque Horatianis*. Vienna etc., 1908.
- Semple, W. H. *Quaestiones exegeticae Sidonianae*.  
Cambridge, 1930.
- Discusses the interpretation of various passages.  
A very helpful work.

## ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE TEXTUAL AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

*add.* = *addidi(t)*.

*C.M.H.* = *Cambridge Medieval History*.

*Class. Quart. loc. cit.* = *Classical Quarterly* xxviii.  
(January, 1934).

*codd.* = *codices*, i.e. all the MSS. (or all the other  
MSS.) whose readings seem worth recording.<sup>1</sup>

*def.* = *defendit*.

*dist.* = *distinxi(t)* ("punctuated").

*edit.* = *editio*.

Other abbreviations, when not self-evident, refer to authorities mentioned in the bibliographical part of the Introduction.

<sup>1</sup> When a reading stands alone after a colon (e.g. *sat es Mohr*: *satis*), *codd.* is to be supplied.

THE POEMS OF GAIUS SOLLIUS  
APOLLINARIS SIDONIUS

GAI SOLII APOLLINARIS  
SIDONII CARMINA

## I

PRAEFATIO PANEGYRICI DICTI ANTIHEMIO  
AVGVSTO BIS CONSVLI

Cum iuvenem super astra Iovem natura locaret  
susciperetque novus regna vetusta deus,  
certavere suum venerari numina numen  
disparibusque modis par cecinere sophos.  
Mars clangente tuba patris praeconia dixit  
laudavitque sono fulmina fulmineo ;  
Arcas et Arcitenens fidibus strepuere sonoris,  
doctior hic citharae pulsibus, ille lyrae ;  
Castalidumque chorus vario modulamine plaussit,  
carminibus, cannis, pollice, voce, pede.  
sed post caelicolas etiam mediocria fertur  
cantica semideum sustinuisse deus.  
tunc Faunis Dryades Satyrisque Mimallones aptae  
fuderunt lepidum, rustica turba, melos.  
alta cicuticines liquerunt Maenala Panes  
postque chelyn placuit fistula rauca Iovi.

<sup>1</sup> Mercury (Hermes), who was born in a cave of M. Cyllene, in Arcadia.

<sup>2</sup> Apollo; cf. 23. 266.



# THE POEMS OF GAIUS SOLLIUS APOLLINARIS SIDONIUS

## I

### PREFACE TO THE PANEGYRIC IN HONOUR OF THE EMPEROR ANTHEMIUS, CONSUL FOR THE SECOND TIME

WHEN nature established the young Jupiter above the stars and the new god was entering upon an ancient sovereignty, all the deities vied in paying worship to their deity, and uttered in diverse measures the same "bravo." Mars with trumpet's blare acclaimed his sire and with thunderous din praised the thunderbolts. The Arcadian<sup>1</sup> and the Archer God<sup>2</sup> sounded the clanging strings, the one more skilled to strike the zither, the other the lyre. Castalia's maiden band gave forth their plaudits in varied strains with songs, reeds, thumb, voice and foot. But after the denizens of heaven, 'tis said, the god brooked even the inferior chants of demigods; then Dryads in union with Fauns, Mimallones<sup>3</sup> with Satyrs, a rustic multitude, poured forth a sprightly song. The Pans that sound the hemlock-reed left high Maenalus, and after the lyre the hoarse pipe

<sup>3</sup> Nymph-attendants of Bacchus.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

hos inter Chiron, ad plectra sonantia saltans,  
     flexit inepta sui membra facetus equi;  
 semivir audiri meruit meruitque placere,  
     quamvis hinnitum, dum canit, ille daret. 20  
 ergo sacrum dives et pauper lingua litabat  
     summaque tunc voti victima cantus erat.  
 sic nos, o Caesar, nostri spes maxima sacelli,  
     post magnos proceres parvula tura damus,  
 audacter docto coram Victore canentes, 25  
     aut Phoebi aut vestro qui solet ore loqui;  
 qui licet aeterna sit vobis quaestor in aula,  
     aeternum nobis ille magister erit.  
 ergo colat variae te, princeps, hostia linguae;  
     nam nova templa tibi pectora nostra facis. 30

## II

### PANEGYRICVS

Auspicio et numero fasces, Auguste, secundos  
 erige et effulgens trabealis mole metalli  
 annum pande novum consul vetus ac sine fastu

---

<sup>1</sup> This idea recurs in 14. 27-30.

<sup>2</sup> Victor, *quaestor sacri palatii* under Anthemius. The holder of this office acted as the Emperor's mouthpiece in the Consistory, the Senate, and elsewhere. He was responsible for the drafting of laws and of Imperial answers to petitions. Rutilius Namatianus (1. 172) likewise describes the *quaestor* as "speaking with the mouth of the Emperor." Cf. Claudian, *Fl. Mall. Cons.* 35, and below, *l.* 5. 569; also *Epist.* viii. 3. 3. *Phoebi ore* refers to Victor's poetry.

<sup>3</sup> *vestro* = *tuo*; so in the next line *vobis* = *tibi*. There seems to be no certain instance of this use before the third century. It is quite common in Sidonius.

## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

pleased Jove's ears. Amid this throng Chiron, dancing to the sounding quill, moved his ungainly horse-limbs elegantly, and that beast-man earned a hearing and found grace even though he neighed in the midst of his singing.<sup>1</sup>

So tongues rich and poor made an acceptable offering, and the greatest tribute in that day's sacrifice was song. In like manner, O Caesar, chiefest hope of our time, I come after great lords and offer thee humble incense, boldly singing my lay in presence of the learned Victor,<sup>2</sup> who is wont to speak either with the voice of Phoebus or with thine,<sup>3</sup> and who, though he is quaestor in thine everlasting court, shall everlastingly be my master.<sup>4</sup> So, my prince, let offering of diverse utterance pay worship to thee; for thou makest our hearts new temples for thy habitation.

### II

#### PANEGYRIC<sup>5</sup>

RAISE up, Augustus, thy second<sup>6</sup> fasces, seconded by Fortune; gleaming with mass of gold upon thy robe do thou, an old consul, begin the new year, and deem it no disgrace to grace<sup>7</sup> the roll of office

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.* although he is your subordinate, he shall always be my master. *Magister* implies "teacher," but there is a play on the use of the word in the titles of various Imperial officials. Victor may have been one of Sidonius' teachers at Lyons or elsewhere, but the present passage does not prove it.

<sup>5</sup> Recited to the Senate on Jan. 1, A.D. 468. See *Introd.*, p. xl, and *Epist.* 1. 9.

<sup>6</sup> A play (as old as Ovid) on the two meanings of *secundus*, "second" and "propitious." Anthemius had been consul for the first time in A.D. 455.

<sup>7</sup> The translator has done his poor best to reproduce one part of the verbal jingle *fastu, fastis, fastigatus*.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

scribere bis fastis; quamquam diademate erinem  
 fastigatus eas umerosque ex more priorum 5  
 includat Sarrana chlamys, te pieta togarum  
 purpura plus capiat, quia res est semper ab aevo  
 rara frequens consul. tuque o cui laurea, Iane,  
 annua debetur, religa torpore soluto  
 quavis fronde comas, subita nec luce pavescas 10  
 principis aut rerum credas elementa moveri.  
 nil natura novat: sol hic quoque venit ab ortu.

Hic est, o proceres, petiit quem Romula virtus  
 et quem vester amor; cui se ceu victa procellis  
 atque carens rectore ratis respublica fractam 15  
 intulit, ut digno melius flectenda magistro,  
 ne tempestates, ne te, pirata, timeret.  
 te prece ruricola expetiit, te foedere iunctus  
 adsensu, te castra tubis, te curia plausu,  
 te punctis scripsere tribus collegaue misit 20  
 te nobis regnumque tibi; suffragia tot sunt  
 quanta legit mundus. fateor, trepidavimus omnes,  
 ne vellet collega pius permittere voto  
 publica vota tuo. credet ventura propago?  
 in nos ut possint, princeps, sic cuncta licere, 25

24-26. *dist. ego.* Cf. 7. 310, 421 sq.

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<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* of Tyrian purple. Gallienus was the first emperor to wear the *chlamys* at Rome (*Hist. Aug., Gallien*, 16. 4).

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* the *toga picta* (purple with gold embroidery), which, with the *tunica palmata*, had become the official garb of the consuls, and is here contrasted with the Imperial garb.

<sup>3</sup> *pirata*: with special reference to Geiseric. Cf. v. 354.

<sup>4</sup> *foed. iunct.*, *i.e.*, the "barbarian" *foederati* (Introd., p. x, n. 2). Their assent was important.

## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

twice with thy name. Although thou walkest with a diadem surmounting thy hair and thy shoulders are covered by a Tyrian<sup>1</sup> mantle after the fashion of thy predecessors, yet may the bright purple of the consul's gown<sup>2</sup> charm thee more; for repeated consulships have from all time been rare. And thou, Janus, to whom a laurel wreath is due every year, dispel thy lethargy, bind thy locks with any foliage; and be not affrighted by the sudden radiance of our prince, nor deem that the elements are in upheaval. Nature is making no change; this day's Sun also has come from the East.

This, my Lords, is the man for whom Rome's brave spirit and your love did yearn, the man to whom our commonwealth, like a ship overcome by tempests and without a pilot, hath committed her broken frame, to be more deftly guided by a worthy steersman, that she may no more fear storm or pirate.<sup>3</sup> The country-dweller's prayer, the goodwill of the leagued peoples,<sup>4</sup> the trumpet in the camp, the plaudits in the senate-house all called for thee; for thee have the tribes recorded their suffrages,<sup>5</sup> and thy colleague hath consigned thee to us and the sovereignty to thee: all the votes that the whole world can muster are for thee. I confess we were all sore disquieted lest thine honest colleague should commit to thine own decision what all the people had decided. Will future generations believe it?—to ensure, O Prince, that this complete power over

<sup>5</sup> A mere rhetorical flourish. The mention of the army, the Senate, and the eastern Emperor is quite correct, as they all played some part in the election of a western Emperor, but the people might merely "acclaim" him after his election. Cf. 5. 386-388.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

de te non totum licuit tibi. facta priorum  
exsuperas, Auguste Leo; nam regna superstat  
qui regnare iubet: melius respublica vestra  
nunc erit una magis, quae sic est facta duorum.

Salve, sceptrorum columen, regina Orientis, 30  
orbis Roma tui, rerum mihi principe misso  
iam non Eoo solum veneranda Quiriti,  
imperii sedes, sed plus pretiosa quod exstas  
imperii genetrix. Rhodopen quae portat et  
Haemum,

Thracum terra tua est, heroum fertilis ora. 35  
excipit hic natos glacies et matris ab alvo  
artus infantum molles nix civica durat.  
pectore vix alitur quisquam, sed ab ubere tractus  
plus potat per vulnus equum; sic lacte relicto  
virtutem gens tota bibit. crevere parumper: 40  
mox pugnam ludunt iaculis; hos suggerit illis  
nutrix plaga iocos. pueri venatibus apti  
lustra feris vacuant, raptio ditata iuventus  
iura colit gladii, consummatamque senectam  
non ferro finire pudet: tali ordine vitae 45  
cives Martis agunt. at tu circumflua ponto  
Europae atque Asiae commissam carpis utrimque

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<sup>1</sup> Leo, the eastern Emperor, who nominated Anthemius as Emperor of the West.

<sup>2</sup> Constantinople was called New Rome in a law of Constantine. Other titles were "Eastern Rome" and "Second Rome."

<sup>3</sup> *Plus* often usurped the functions of *magis*, as *magis* usurped those of *potius*. *Sed magis* is used for "but rather" even in the poetry of the classical period. Here *sed plus* has the same meaning. *Plus quam* is sometimes found in the

## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

us should be thine, full power over thyself was denied thee. Augustus Leo,<sup>1</sup> thou dost surpass the deeds of thy forerunners; for he who can command a man to reign towers above regal power. Now your government shall be more perfectly one, having thus become a government of two.

All hail to thee, pillar of sceptred power, Queen of the East, Rome of thy hemisphere,<sup>2</sup> no longer to be worshipped by the eastern citizen alone, now that thou hast sent me a sovereign prince—O home of Empire, and more precious in that thou appearest before the world as Empire's mother! The land of the Thracians, whereon Rhodope and Haemus rest, is thine, a region fruitful of heroes. Here children are born into a world of ice, and their native snow hardens the soft limbs of infants even from the mother's womb. Scarce anyone is reared at the breast; rather<sup>3</sup> is he dragged from the maternal bosom to suck from a horse through a wound; thus deserting milk the whole race drinks in courage. They have grown but a short time, and anon they play at battle with javelins; this sport is prompted by the wounds that suckled them. The boys, gifted hunters, clear the dens of their beasts; the young men, enriched with plunder, honour the laws of the sword; and when their old age has reached its fullness not to end it with steel is a disgrace. Thus do these countrymen of Mars order their lives. But thou, surrounded by the sea, dost imbibe a tempered blend of Europe's and Asia's air, commingled from two sides;

sense of *potius quam*. Another use of *plus = magis* is to form comparatives (*e.g.* v. 33 above). This is common in Sidonius: see Schmalz-Hofmann, *Syntax*, pp. 463 f.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

temperiem ; nam Bistonios Aquilonis hiatus  
 proxima Calchidici sensim tuba temperat Euri.  
 interea te Susa tremunt ac supplice cultu 50  
 flectit Achaemenius lunatum Persa tiaram.  
 Indus odorifero crinem madefactus amomo  
 in tua lucra feris exarmat guttur alumnis,  
 ut pandum dependat ebur ; sic trunca reportat  
 Bosphoreis elephas inglorius ora tributis. 55  
 porrigis ingentem spatiosis moenibus urbem,  
 quam tamen angustam populus facit ; itur in aequor  
 molibus et veteres tellus nova contrahit undas ;  
 namque Dicarcheae translatus pulvis harenae  
 intratis solidatur aquis durataque massa 60  
 sustinet advectos peregrino in gurgite campos.  
 sic te dispositam spectantemque undique portus,  
 vallatam pelago terrarum commoda cingunt.  
 fortunata sat es Romae partita triumphos,  
 et iam non querimur : valeat divisio regni. 65  
 concordant lancis partes ; dum pondera nostra  
 suscipis, aequasti.

Tali tu civis ab urbe  
 Procopio genitore micas, cui prisca propago  
 Augustis venit a proavis ; quem dicere digno

64. sat es *Mohr* : satis.

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<sup>1</sup> Sidonius means *Calchedonius* or *Chalcedonius*, from Chalcedon, which faced Constantinople on the Asiatic side of the strait.

<sup>2</sup> *Lunatus* may mean "moon-shaped" or "crescent-shaped," but among the many forms of the tiara I have not found one really entitled to such a description. The epithet may refer to the ornamentation. Martial uses *lunatus* for "decorated with crescents."

<sup>3</sup> Dicarchus, or Dicaearchus, was the founder of Puteoli. The reference is to *pulvis Puteolanus* (*pozzolana*), a volcanic earth found near Puteoli. The cement made from it sets hard when submerged in water. The "invasion" of the sea



## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

for the Thracian blasts of Aquilo are gradually softened by the breath of Eurus' trumpet, wafted from Calchis<sup>1</sup> hard by. Meanwhile Susa trembles before thee, and the Persian of Achaemenes' race in suppliant guise inclines his crescent-tiara.<sup>2</sup> The Indian, with hair steeped in fragrant balm, disarms for thy profit the throat of his land's wild denizens, that he may make payment of curved ivory; thus the elephant takes home ingloriously a mouth shorn of the tribute yielded to the Bosphorus. Thou dost spread out a great city of spacious walls, yet doth the multitude therein make its bounds too narrow; so the sea is invaded with massive masonry and new land cramps the old waters; for the dusty sand of Puteoli<sup>3</sup> is brought thither and made solid by entering the water, and the hardened mass bears upon it imported plains amid an alien flood. Thus art thou ordered; on all sides thou beholdest harbours, and, walled in as thou art by the sea, thou art surrounded by all the blessings of earth. Right fortunate art thou in having shared Rome's triumphs, and now we regret it no longer; farewell to the division of the empire! The two sides of the balance are poised; by taking over our weights thou hast made all even.

A citizen from such a city, thou shinest also with the lustre of thy father Procopius,<sup>4</sup> whose ancient lineage springs from imperial ancestors, a man here described took place at various points of the shore when the walls of Constantine were no longer able to contain the whole population. For subsequent extensions and for the harbours see Bury, *Later Rom. Emp.* I. pp. 70-73.

<sup>4</sup> Procopius, a Galatian who rose to be *magister militum per Orientem* and patrician. He obviously claimed descent from the Procopius who was a so-called Emperor for a few months (365-6), and who seems to have been related to the house of Constantine.

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non datur eloquio, nec si modo surgat Averno      70  
 qui cantu flexit scopulos digitisque canoris  
 compulit auritas ad plectrum currere silvas,  
 cum starent Hebri latices cursuque ligato  
 fluminis attoniti carmen magis unda sitiret.

Huic quondam iuveni reparatio credita pacis      75  
 Assyriae; stupuit primis se Parthus in annis  
 consilium non ferre senis; conterritus haesit  
 quisque sedet sub rege satraps: ita vinxerat omnes  
 legati genius. tremuerunt Medica rura,  
 quaeque draconigenae portas non clauserat hosti, 80  
 tum demum Babylon nimis est sibi visa patere.  
 partibus at postquam statuit nova formula foedus  
 Procopio dictante magis, iuratur ab illis  
 ignis et unda deus, nec non rata pacta futura  
 hic divos testatur avos. Chaldaeus in extis      85  
 pontificum de more senex arcana peregit  
 murmura; gemmantem pateram rex ipse retentans  
 fudit turicremis carchesia cernuus aris.  
 suscipit hinc reducem duplicati culmen honoris:

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<sup>1</sup> Orpheus. There is a similar passage in 23. 178-94.

<sup>2</sup> Sidonius likes elliptical uses of *magis* and *plus*. The point here seems to be "the river was thirsty rather than thirst-quenching." Cf. 23. 194.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* to Procopius.

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whom no eloquence could worthily celebrate—not even if from Avernus that bard<sup>1</sup> should arise who once with his song swayed rocks and with his tuneful fingers impelled the woods to hasten, all ears, to the sounding quill, while the waters of Hebrus stood still and, its flow held fast, the waves of the entranced river were strangely athirst<sup>2</sup> for song.

To him<sup>3</sup> once in his youth was committed the restoring of peace with Assyria.<sup>4</sup> The Parthian was amazed that he had no power to withstand the aged wisdom of those youthful years. Every satrap that sat below the king faltered in terror, so strongly had the envoy's genius gripped them. The Median realms trembled, and Babylon, that had not closed her gates against the serpent-born foe,<sup>5</sup> now at last thought herself too widely opened. Then when a treaty had been established between them on new terms, recited by Procopius to the Magi, they took oath by their gods, fire and water, and he called his divine ancestors to witness that the bargain should be upheld. An aged Chaldaean over a victim's entrails, in the manner of the pontiffs, muttered the mystic words, and the king himself, holding a jewelled bowl, stooped and poured out cups over the incense-burning altar. When the envoy returned, the eminence of a twofold honour welcomed him;

<sup>4</sup> *Assyriac, Parthus, Medica*. All these refer to the Persian empire. This embassy negotiated terms of peace with Varahran V in A.D. 422 after a war caused by the persecutions of Christians in Persia. Bury, II. pp. 4 f.

<sup>5</sup> Alexander the Great; see *vv.* 121–3. Babylon admitted Alexander without a struggle. Sidonius absurdly implies that she showed contempt for his impending attack by keeping her gates open. A similar idea occurs in *v.* 449 (unless we read *strident*).

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

patricius nec non peditumque equitumque magister  
 praeficitur castris, ubi Tauri claustra cohercens 91  
 Aethiopasque vagos belli terrore relegans  
 gurgite pacato famulum spectaret Orontem.

Huic socer Anthemius, praefectus, consul et idem,  
 iudiciis populos atque annum nomine rexit. 95  
 purpureos Fortuna viros cum murice semper  
 prosequitur; solum hoc tantum mutatur in illis,  
 ut regnet qui consul erat. sed omittimus omnes:  
 iam tu ad plectra veni, tritus cui casside crinis  
 ad diadema venit, rutilum cui Caesaris ostrum 100  
 deposito thorace datur sceptroque replenda  
 mucrone est vacuata manus. cunabula vestra  
 imperii fulsere notis et praescia tellus  
 aurea converso promisit saecula fetu.  
 te nascente ferunt exorto flumina melle 105  
 dulcatis cunctata vadis oleique liquores  
 isse per attonitas baca pendente trapetas.

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<sup>1</sup> He became *magister utriusque militiae* (or *m. peditum et equitum* or *m. peditum equitumque*), receiving the eastern command. In the eastern Empire there were five such officers, two "in the Presence" and three with special districts assigned to them. They all received the patriciate sooner or later. In the west there were originally only two such *magistri militum* (this, or *mag. militiae*, is a handy abbreviation which may be used of all such officers). These were called *magister peditum* and *mag. equitum* respectively, but as the *magister peditum* held a superior command over both infantry and cavalry he came to be called *magister peditum equitumque* or *magister utriusque militiae*. By and by this title was extended to the *magister equitum*, and his all-powerful superior is specially designated as *Patricius*; he was "The Patrician" *par excellence*, not only commander-in-chief but leading adviser and right-hand man of the Emperor. In this sense the title was borne by Aëtius, Ricimer, and others. [This seems to be the prevalent view; see, however, Professor Norman Baynes in *Journ. Rom. Stud.* XII. (1922), pp. 224-229.]

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Patrician now and Master of Horse and Foot,<sup>1</sup> he was set in command of camps where he must needs hold the barriers of Taurus and force the roaming Ethiopians over the border by the terror of war and behold Orontes with calmed flood subservient to his will.

His wife's father was Anthemius,<sup>2</sup> who, as prefect and likewise consul, ordered peoples by his judgments and the year by his name. Men of the purple<sup>3</sup> are ever attended by Fortune with purple ready to bestow; the only change that happens to them is that he who was consul becomes sovereign. But I pass over all the others: come thou to my lyre, thou whose hair frayed by the warrior's helmet came<sup>4</sup> to wear the diadem, thou who hast laid aside the breastplate to receive the glowing purple of a Caesar, and whose hand hath been emptied of the sword to be filled with the sceptre. Thy cradle gleamed with tokens of imperial power, and the prophetic earth, altering her progeny, gave promise of a golden age. They tell how, at thy birth, honey appeared, making rivers flow tardily with sweetened waters, and oil ran through the amazed mills while the olive-berry still

<sup>2</sup> Anthemius, a leading figure in the early part of the fifth century; *comes sacrarum largitionum* 400, *magister officiorum* 404, *praefectus praetorio orientis* 404–415, consul 405, *patricius* not later than 406; regent for the young Theodosius II on the death of Arcadius (408). He built the new walls of Constantinople (413).

<sup>3</sup> i.e. of Imperial or consular family: for the association of purple with the consulship see v. 7 n., also 24. 98. The meaning is that consulships and the Imperial throne are the natural destiny of such persons.

<sup>4</sup> *venit* is Historic Present, which Sidonius uses very freely. The rather frigid iteration *veni—venit* is no doubt intentional.

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protulit undantem segetem sine semine campus  
 et sine se natis invidit pampinus uvis.  
 hibernae rubuere rosae spretoque rigore 110  
 lilia permixtis insultavere pruinis.  
 tale puerperium quotiens Lucina resolvit,  
 mos elementorum cedit regnique futuri  
 fit rerum novitate fides. venisse beatos  
 sic loquitur natura deos: constantis Iuli 115  
 lambebant teneros incendia blanda capillos;  
 Astyages Cyro pellendus forte nepoti  
 inguinis expavit diffusum vite racemum;  
 praebruit intrepido mammas lupa feta Quirino;  
 Iulius in lucem venit dum laurea flagrat; 120  
 magnus Alexander nec non Augustus habentur  
 concepti serpente deo Phoebumque Iovemque  
 divisere sibi: namque horum quaesiit unus  
 Cinyphia sub Syrte patrem; maculis genetricis  
 alter Phoebigenam sese gaudebat haberi, 125  
 Paeonii iactans Epidauria signa draconis.  
 multos cinxerunt aquilae subitumque per orbem  
 lusit venturas famulatrix penna coronas.  
 ast hunc, egregii procures, ad scepra vocari  
 iam tum nosse datum est, laribus cum forte paternis  
 protulit excisus iam non sua germina palmes. 131

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<sup>1</sup> Verg. *Aen.* II. 682.

<sup>2</sup> Herodotus I. 108. He dreamed that a vine issued from his daughter's womb and spread over all Asia.

<sup>3</sup> This story does not seem to occur in any previous writer. Possibly it was in the early part (now lost) of Suetonius' *Iulius*.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander the Great claimed to be the son of Zeus Ammon, Augustus was rumoured to be the son of Apollo; these gods were said to have visited the mothers in the form of serpents. For accounts of Alexander's miraculous birth see, for example,

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hung upon the bough. The plain brought forth without seed a waving crop and the vine-branch looked grudgingly on the grapes brought into being without her. Roses blushed red in winter and lilies scorning the cold mocked the surrounding frosts.

• When Lucina is bringing such a birth to fulfilment the order of the elements gives way and a changed world gives assurance of coming sovereignty. Thus does nature declare that blessed gods have arrived. Flames played lovingly round the childish locks of the staunch Iulus<sup>1</sup>; Astyages,<sup>2</sup> fated to be dethroned by his grandson Cyrus, shuddered to see the grape-clusters spreading from the vine that grew from the womb; the mother-wolf gave suck to the untroubled Quirinus; Julius came into the world whilst a laurel blazed<sup>3</sup>; Alexander the Great and Augustus are deemed to have been conceived of a serpent god,<sup>4</sup> and they claimed between them Phoebus and Jupiter as their progenitors; for one of them sought his sire near the Cinyphian Syrtes, the other rejoiced that from his mother's marks he was deemed the offspring of Phoebus, and he vaunted the imprints of the healing serpent of Epidaurus. Many have been encircled by eagles, and a quick-formed ring of cringing plumage has playfully figured the crown that was to come. But as for this prince of ours, illustrious Lords, right early might it be known that he was destined for the sceptre, when it came to pass that in his father's house a severed vine-branch brought forth shoots no longer its own. That was the

• Justin. xi. 11 and Plutarch *Alex.* cc. 2 sq.; for Augustus see Suet. *Aug.* 94. From v. 126 it seems clear that Sidonius represents Augustus as claiming to be the son of Aesculapius, and therefore the *grandson* of Apollo.

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imperii ver illud erat ; sub imagine frondis  
 dextra per arentem florebant omina virgam.  
 at postquam primos infans exegerat annos,  
 reptabat super arma patris, quamque arta terebat 135  
 lammina cervicem gemina complexus ab ulna  
 livida laxatis intrabat ad oscula cristis.  
 ludus erat puero raptas ex hoste sagittas  
 festina tractare manu captosque per arcus  
 flexa reluctantes in cornua trudere nervos, 140  
 nunc tremulum tenero iaculum torquere lacerto  
 inque frementis equi dorsum cum pondere conti  
 indutas Chalybum saltu transferre catenas,  
 inventas agitare feras et fronde latentes  
 quaerere, deprensas modo claudere cassibus artis,  
 nunc torto penetrare veru : tum saepe fragore 146  
 laudari comitum, frendens cum belua ferrum  
 ferret et intratos exirent arma per armos.  
 conde Pelethronios, alacer puer et venator,  
 Aeacida, titulos, quamquam subiecta magistri 150  
 terga premens et ob hoc securus lustra pererrans  
 tu potius regereris equo. non principe nostro  
 spicula direxit melius Pythona superstans  
 Paean, cum vacua turbatus paene phlaetra  
 figeret innumeris numerosa volumina telis. 155

140. tendere *Buecheler*.

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<sup>1</sup> As the boy's hands seem to be otherwise engaged (v. 136), the idea may be that he eagerly pushes the visor up with his face until it is sufficiently open for his purpose. In any case the metal bruises him as he tries to snatch a kiss—this seems to be the meaning of *livida oscula*; but the same adjective is used in 7. 742 to denote the discoloration of the skin through wearing a helmet, and Dr. Semple (*Quaest. Ex.*, p. 69) may be right in finding the same reference here. *Cristis* means



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spring-time of his sovereignty ; in the guise of leafage happy omens burgeoned along that withered branch. But when the early years of infancy were past he would clamber over his father's armour, and gripping with his two forearms the neck pressed by the close-fitting metal he would loosen the helmet and find an entrance for his livid kisses.<sup>1</sup> In boyhood it was his sport to handle eagerly arrows that had been seized from the foe, and on captive bows to force the resisting strings on to the curving horn, or to hurl with boyish arm the quivering javelin, or with a leap to throw upon the back of a chafing steed all his weight of steel chain-armour and heavy lance ; or at other times to find and chase the wild beasts, to seek them in their leafy lurking-places and, when he espied them, sometimes to enclose them in a tight net, sometimes to pierce them with cast of spear. Then would he oft be cheered with great noise by his comrades, as with gnashing teeth the beast received the steel and the weapon entered and passed clean through the shoulders. Now hide thy Thessalian honours, scion of Acacus,<sup>2</sup> high-mettled boy and hunter—though, as thou didst bestride thy master's compliant back, and so traverse the haunts of beasts in safety, it was rather thou that wert controlled by thy steed. Even Paeon Apollo did not aim his shafts better than our prince, as the god stood over Python and, sore distressed, with quiver well-nigh emptied, pierced those numerous coils with innumerable weapons.

<sup>1</sup> "helmet," as in 7. 242. This rare use occurs first in Silius IV. 156, but Sidonius probably borrowed it from Claudian, *Rufin.* I. 346.

<sup>2</sup> *Acacida*, Achilles : *magistri*, Chiron the centaur.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Nec minus haec inter veteres audire sophistas :  
 Mileto quod crete Thales vadimonia culpas ;  
 Lindie quod Cleobule canis "modus optimus esto" ;  
 ex Ephyra totum meditaris quod Periander ;  
 Attice quodve Solon finem bene respicis aevi ; 160  
 Prienaee Bia, quod plus tibi turba malorum est ;  
 noscere quod tempus, Lesbo sate Pittace, suades ;  
 quod se nosse omnes vis, ex Lacedaemone Chilon.  
 praeterea didicit varias, nova dogmata, sectas :  
 quidquid laudavit Scythicis Anacharsis in arvis ;  
 quidquid legifero profecit Sparta Lycurgo ; 166  
 quidquid Erechtheis Cynicorum turba volutat  
 gymnasiis, imitata tuos, Epicure, sodales ;  
 quidquid nil verum statuens Academia duplex  
 personat ; arroso quidquid sapit ungue Cleanthes ;  
 quidquid Pythagoras, Democritus, Heraclitus 171  
 deflevit, risit, tacuit ; quodcumque Platonis  
 ingenium, quod in arce fuit, docet ordine terno,

165. laudatum est *codd.*

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 15. 44 sqq., where the maxims of the Seven Sages are the same as here, except in the case of Solon. The saying attributed to Periander seems to have been originally μελέτη (Doric μελέτα) τὸ πᾶν, "practice is everything," "practice makes perfect"; but Sidonius, like several other ancient authors, takes μελέτα as the imperative of the verb μελετᾶν, "to practise."

<sup>2</sup> The Cynics were more allied in doctrine to the Stoics than to the Epicureans, and Sidonius may really be thinking of the Cyrenaics; but Augustine, *C.D.* xix. 1 ad fin., asserts that philosophers with very different views of the *summum bonum* (in some cases "virtue," in others "pleasure") adopted the dress and customs of the Cynic school and were called *Cynici*. Origen, *In Exod. Hom.* iv. § 6 (p. 178, ll. 21 ff., Baehrens), alleges that the Cynics make "pleasure and lust" their *summum bonum*; cf. Augustine, *Contra Acad.* III. 19. 42.

<sup>3</sup> The doctrine that certain truth is unattainable belongs especially to the New Academy, but Cicero, as Mr. Semple

## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

And amid all these doings he busied himself no less in hearkening to the lore of ancient sages<sup>1</sup>; how Thales, that son of Miletus, condemned all lawsuits, how Cleobulus of Lindus sings "Let moderation be our ideal," how Periander of Corinth practises everything, how Athenian Solon keeps his eye wisely fixed on life's end, how Bias of Priene deems the wicked to be the majority, how Pittacus, native of Lesbos, advises to mark well the opportune time, and how Chilon of Lacedaemon would have all men know themselves. Moreover, he learned new doctrines of divers schools—whatsoever in the Scythian land Anacharsis praised, all the gain that Sparta got with Lycurgus for her law-giver, all that the company of Cynics debates in the Erechthean gymnasium, copying the disciples of Epicurus<sup>2</sup>; all that the two Academies<sup>3</sup> loudly proclaim, affirming naught to be true; all the wisdom that Cleanthes has won with much biting of nails<sup>4</sup>; the tears of Heraclitus, the laughter of Democritus, or the silence of Pythagoras; whatsoever teaching Plato's intellect, which dwelt in the citadel,<sup>5</sup> sets forth in

points out (p. 71), claims that the attitude of the Old Academy, even of Plato himself, was similar (*Ac. I.* 46).

<sup>4</sup> The biting of the nails seems to have been traditionally associated with Cleanthes. Cf. *Epist.* IX. 9. 14. Probably he was so represented in some well-known work of art.

<sup>5</sup> *in arce*. Plato taught that the rational part of the soul resides in the head, which is, as it were, the citadel which commands the non-rational parts (the passionate and the appetitive), situated respectively in the breast and under the midriff. The doctrine is briefly stated in *Cic. Tusc.* I. 20. *In arce fuit* could also mean "was pre-eminent" (cf. 23. 142), and there may be a *double entente* here. *Ordine tertio* probably refers, not to the tripartite division of the soul, but to the division of Philosophy into Physics, Logic, and Ethics. See 15. 100f. and note.

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quae vel Aristoteles, partitus membra loquendi,  
 argumentosis dat retia syllogismis ; 175  
 quidquid Anaximenes, Euclides, Archyta, Zenon,  
 Arcesilas, Chrysippus Anaxagorasque dederunt,  
 Socraticusque animus post fatum in Phaedone vivus,  
 despiciens vastas tenuato in crure catenas,  
 cum tremere mors ipsa reum ferretque venenum  
 pallida securo lictoris dextra magistro. 181  
 praeterea quidquid Latialibus indere libris  
 prisca aetas studuit, totum percurrere suetus :  
 Mantua quas acies pelagique pericula lusit  
 Zmyrnaeas imitata tubas, quamcumque loquendi 185  
 Arpinas dat consul opem, sine fine secutus  
 fabro progenitum, spreto cui patre polita  
 eloquiis plus lingua fuit, vel quidquid in aevum  
 mittunt Euganeis Patavina volumina chartis ;  
 qua Crispus brevitatem placet, quo pondere Varro,  
 quo genio Plautus, quo fulmine Quintilianus, 191  
 qua pompa Tacitus numquam sine laude loquendus.

179. in *C. om. codd. plerique.*

186. secutus fabro progenitum *Mohr et Luetjohann* : locutus  
 tabro progenitus.

<sup>1</sup> Homer.

<sup>2</sup> Cicero.

<sup>3</sup> Demosthenes, cf. 23. 143; Juvenal X. 130-32. The father of Demosthenes was a wealthy sword-manufacturer. *Polita* contains an allusion to the father's trade; Sidonius uses *polire* in the sense of "sharpen"; cf. *expolire*, 23. 144.

<sup>4</sup> The works of Livy. The Euganei inhabited Venetia, but were driven out by the Veneti. *Euganeus* in poetry means "Venetian," and especially "Paduan." Padua (*Patavium*) was Livy's birthplace.

<sup>5</sup> Sallust (*C. Sallustius Crispus*).

<sup>6</sup> Sidonius, like other late authors, uses *genius* in various meanings, not always easy to determine. The renderings given in this version generally follow the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*.

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triple array; or again, the snares that Aristotle, dividing speech into its members, sets for us with his syllogistic reasoning; and also whatever has been bestowed by Anaximenes, Euclid, Archytas, Zeno, Arcesilas, Chrysippus and Anaxagoras, and by the soul of Socrates as it lives after his death in the *Phaedo*, a soul that recked naught of the huge fetters on his wasted leg, while death's self trembled before the prisoner and the executioner's hand was pale as it proffered the poison, though the master's heart was untroubled. Besides these he was wont to range through all that antiquity strove to inscribe on Latin pages: the battles and the ocean perils that Mantua paraded, copying the trumpet-tones of Smyrna's bard<sup>1</sup>; whatever aid to speaking the consul of Arpinum<sup>2</sup> affords, he who follows without ceasing that smith's son<sup>3</sup> who set his father at naught, deeming more precious a tongue made keen by use of eloquence; or again whatever the volumes of the Paduan<sup>4</sup> deliver for all time in those Euganean pages; the brevity that wins applause in Crispus,<sup>5</sup> the weightiness of Varro, the wit<sup>6</sup> of Plautus, the lightning of Quintilian,<sup>7</sup> and the majesty of Tacitus,<sup>8</sup> a name never to be uttered without praise.

<sup>7</sup> This can scarcely refer to the *Institutio Oratoria*. Quintilian in early life published one of his speeches, and garbled versions of others were published without his authority. But Sidonius is almost certainly thinking not of these but of the declamations (mostly still extant) which were falsely attributed to Quintilian. Cf. 9. 317; *Epist.* V, 10. 3. *Fulmen* is applied to eloquence by Quintilian himself, VIII. 6. 7 and XII. 10. 65 (the latter passage alluding to the famous saying of Aristophanes about the "flashing and thundering" Pericles, *Acharnians* 531); also by Cicero and others.

<sup>8</sup> Sidonius plays on the word *Tacitus* ("silent"); cf. 23. 154, *Epist.* IV. 22. 2.

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His hunc formatum studiis, natalibus ortum,  
 moribus imbutum princeps cui mundus ab Euro  
 ad Zephyrum tunc sceptrā dabat, cui nubilis atque  
 unica purpureos debebat nata nepotes, 196  
 elegit generum; sed non ut deside luxu  
 fortuna soceri contentus et otia captans  
 nil sibi deberet; comitis sed iure recepto  
 Danuvii ripas et tractum limitis ampli 200  
 circuit, hortatur, disponit, discutit, armat.  
 sic sub patre Pius moderatus castra parentis,  
 sic Marcus vivente Pio, post iura daturi,  
 innumerabilibus legionibus imperitabant.  
 hinc reduci datur omnis honos, et utrique magister  
 militiae consulque micat, coniuncta potestas 206  
 patricii, celerique gradu privata ecurrit  
 culmina conscenditque senum puer ipse curulem,  
 sedit et emerito iuvenis veteranus in auro.  
 Iamque parens divos: sed vobis nulla cupido 210  
 imperii; longam diademata passa repulsam

. 205. honos edit. Greg. et Collomb.: honor.

<sup>1</sup> Marcian, Emperor of the East, 450-57.

<sup>2</sup> Aelia Marcia Euphemia.

<sup>3</sup> He received the dignity of a *comes rei militaris*, a frequent stepping-stone to a *magisterium militum*, as in the present case.

<sup>4</sup> History does not record any military service on the part of Marcus Aurelius before the death of Antoninus Pius.

<sup>5</sup> A gilded curule chair was used by the Emperors on ceremonial occasions, but there is no evidence that gold ornamentation was allowed on other *sellae curules*. It was, however, at this time allowed on the *sellae gestatoriae* of consuls (see *Epist.* VIII. 8. 3), and Sidonius may be referring to this.

<sup>6</sup> i.e. his father-in-law Marcian: *divos*: cf. v. 318. It is odd to find the Christian Sidonius writing thus; but literary tradition is far more potent than religion in his poetry.

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By such studies was he moulded, from such lineage sprung, in such habits nurtured; and the prince<sup>1</sup> to whom at that time the world from east to west was giving the sceptre, on whom an only daughter,<sup>2</sup> now of age for wedlock, must needs bestow grandchildren that should wear the purple, chose this man for her husband. Yet he did not rest in slothful luxury, content with her father's glory, seeking a life of ease and owing nothing to himself; nay, receiving a count's authority<sup>3</sup> he traversed the Danube bank and the whole length of the great frontier-lines, exhorting, arranging, examining, equipping. Even so had Pius under his father's sway ruled his father's camps; thus Marcus, too, while Pius still lived<sup>4</sup>; these two, destined later to be lawgivers, then commanded legions innumerable. When Anthemius returned, every office was bestowed upon him; he shone upon the world as Master of Both Services and as consul; to this was added the authority of Patrician; and thus with speedy step he ran through the highest dignities that a subject may reach; youth though he was, he mounted the curule throne of the elders, and sat, a young veteran, on the gold<sup>5</sup> that belongs to the old campaigner.

And now thy father<sup>6</sup> was numbered with the gods; but thou hadst no craving for empire; the diadem after a long rejection chose out an illustrious man,<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Leo I occupied a comparatively humble position (he was a *tribunus militum*, with the rank of count) when he was suddenly promoted to the Imperial throne at the age of nearly 60. The words *longam passa repulsam* cannot refer to the very short interval between the death of Marcian and the accession of Leo; they state (with what truth we cannot say) that Anthemius had persistently declined the offer of Marcian to designate him as his successor.

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insignem legere virum, quem deinde legentem  
 spernere non posses : soli tibi contulit uni  
 hoc Fortuna decus, quamquam te posceret ordo,  
 ut lectus princeps mage quam videre relictus. 215  
 post socerum Augustum regnas, sed non tibi venit  
 purpura per thalamos, et coniunx regia regno  
 laus potius quam causa fuit ; nam iuris habenis  
 non generum legit respublica, sed generosum.  
 fallor, bis gemino nisi cardine rem probat orbis : 220  
 ambit te Zephyrus rectorem, destinat Eurus,  
 ad Boream pugnās et formidaris ad Austrum.

Ante tamen quam te socium collega crearet,  
 perstrinxisse libet quos Illyris ora triumphos  
 viderit, excisam quae se Valameris ab armis 225  
 forte ducis nostri vitio deserta gemebat.  
 haud aliter, caesus quondam cum Caepio robur  
 dedit Ausonium, subita cogente ruina  
 electura ducem post guttura fracta Iugurthae  
 ultum Arpinatem Calpurnia foedera lixam 230  
 opposuit rabido respublica territa Cimbro.

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<sup>1</sup> Bury (I. 314) wrongly takes *ordo* to mean the Senate.

<sup>2</sup> Illyricum; for its extent see Hodgkin I. 295. The name of the unworthy *dux* is unknown. Some have absurdly tried to identify him with Arnegisclus, *magister militum per Thracias*, who died fighting bravely against Attila in A.D. 447. After the break-up of the Hunnish dominion in A.D. 454 the Ostrogoths were allowed by Marcian to settle in Pannonia. Some years later, when Leo had refused to pay the subsidy which Marcian had granted them, they overran and devastated Illyricum. It was obviously one of these raids that Anthemius checked, but no other writer mentions the episode. Sidonius is likewise the sole authority for the campaign against Hormidac (*vv.* 236 sqq.)

<sup>3</sup> Walamir was one of the three Ostrogoth kings.

<sup>4</sup> Caepio, defeated with great slaughter by the Cimbrians at Arausio (Orange), 105 B.C.



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one whom thou couldst not slight when he in his turn chose thee. Fortune hath given thee this unique honour, that although the order of succession demanded thee,<sup>1</sup> thou art looked on as a prince chosen, not as a prince by inheritance. Thou reignest after an Augustus who was thy wife's father, but the purple came not to thee by thy marriage; thy royal bride hath been rather the glory of thy royalty than its cause, for when the commonwealth chose thee to wield the reins of state it was for thy kingly soul, not for thy kin. My judgment errs if the four quarters of the earth do not approve the choice; the West seeks thee, the East sends thee, as ruler; thou fightest in the North and art feared in the South.

But I would fain touch on the triumphs that the Illyrian region<sup>2</sup> beheld before thy colleague made thee his partner, when that land, deserted, as it chanced, through a Roman leader's fault, was bemoaning its devastation by the arms of Walamir.<sup>3</sup> Even so was it in former days when Caépio's<sup>4</sup> slaughter had given up Ausonia's best warriors to the enemy; the terrified commonwealth, compelled by that crashing blow, essayed to choose a leader; 'twas after the strangling of Jugurtha, and they set against the frenzied Cimbrian the batman<sup>5</sup> from Arpinum who had avenged Calpurnius' treaty.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ancient writers are fond of exaggerating the lowly origin of Gaius Marius. *Lixa* properly means "camp-sutler," but in later Latin we sometimes find *lixæ* used where *calones* would be more correct. The *calones* were slave-attendants of officers or soldiers.

<sup>2</sup> The treaty made with Jugurtha in 111 B.C. by Calpurnius Bestia and Aemilius Scaurus, who had been bribed by the Numidian.

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hic primum ut vestras aquilas provincia vidit,  
desiit hostiles confestim horrere dracones.  
ilicet edomiti bello praedaeque carentes  
mox ipsi tua praeda iacent.

Sed omittimus istos 235

ut populatores: belli magis acta revolve;  
quod bellum non parva manus nec carcere fracto  
ad gladiaturam tu Spartace vinete parasti,  
sed Scythicae vaga turba plagae, feritatis abundans,  
dira, rapax, vchemens, ipsis quoque gentibus illic  
barbara barbaricis, cuius dux Hormidac atque 241  
civis erat. quis tale solum est moresque genusque:

Albus Hyperboreis Tanais qua vallibus actus  
Riphaea de caute cadit, iacet axe sub Vrsae  
gens animis membrisque minax: ita vultibus ipsis 245  
infantum suus horror inest. consurgit in artum  
massa rotunda caput; geminis sub fronte cavernis  
visus adest oculis absentibus; acta cerebri  
in cameram vix ad refugos lux pervenit orbes,  
non tamen et clausos; nam fornice non spatioso 250  
magna vident spatia, et maioris luminis usum

242. moresque *Mohr*: murique.

246. atrum *C*.

<sup>1</sup> The typically Roman "eagle" (the traditional legionary standard) is contrasted with the "dragons" of the "barbarians." But the use of dragon-ensigns had found its way into the Roman army long before, and it is possible that by this time they had entirely supplanted the ordinary standard. For a description of them see §. 402. It seems probable that the "eagle" belonged only to the full legion of 6,000 men, and not to the smaller units which were now dignified with the title of *legio*. See Grosse, *Röm. Militärgeschichte*, pp. 229-34.

<sup>2</sup> *axe sub Vrsae*. "The Huns came originally from the

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Thereupon the province, beholding thine eagles,<sup>1</sup> ceased of a sudden to shudder at the dragons of the foe. Straightway crushed in war and reft of their spoil they in their turn were spoils for thee, lying prostrate at thy feet.

But such folk I pass by as mere raiders; rather do I now relate the exploits of a real war; which war no small band contrived, no Spartacus, bondsman destined for the gladiator's work, who had burst open his prison, but a roaming multitude from Scythian clime, teeming with savagery, frightful, ravening, violent, barbarous even in the eyes of the barbarian peoples around them, a race whose leader was Hormidac, a man of their own nation. Their land, their habits and their origin were after this manner.

Where the white Tanais, driven down through the valleys of the far north, falls from the Rhiphaean crags, in the region of the Bear,<sup>2</sup> there dwells a race with menace in heart and limbs<sup>3</sup>; for truly the very faces of their infants have a gruesomeness all their own. Their heads are great round masses rising to a narrow crown; in two hollows beneath the brow resides their sight, but the eyes are far to seek; the light, as it forces its way into the arched recesses in the skull,<sup>4</sup> can scarce reach those retreating orbs—retreating, but not shut; for from that vault of narrow space they enjoy a spacious vision, and pel-

East, but it was from the North that they drove the Goths down on the Romans." L. C. Purser.

<sup>3</sup> For other descriptions of the Huns see Claud. *Rufin.* I. 323-31 (imitated here), Amm. Marc. XXXI. 2. 1-11, Jordan. *Get.* 24 and (on Attila) 35.

<sup>4</sup> *cameram*, one of the two *cavernae* (247). *Cameras* (or *orbem* for *orbes*) would have been clearer. It seems best to make both nouns plural in the translation.

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perspicua in puteis compensant puncta profundis.  
 tum, ne per malas excreseat fistula duplex,  
 obtundit teneras circumdata fascia nares,  
 ut galeis cedant: sic propter proelia natos 255  
 maternus deformat amor, quia tensa genarum  
 non interiecto fit latior area naso.  
 cetera pars est pulchra viris: stant pectora vasta,  
 insignes umeri, succincta sub ilibus alvus.  
 forma quidem pediti media est, procera sed exstat 260  
 si cernas equites: sic longi sacpe putantur  
 si sedeant. vix matre carens ut constitit infans,  
 mox praebebat dorsum sonipes; cognata reare  
 membra viris: ita semper equo ceu fixus adhaeret  
 rector; cornipedum tergo gens altera fertur, 265  
 haec habitat. teretes arcus et spicula cordi,  
 terribiles certaeque manus iaculisque ferendae  
 mortis fixa fides et non peccante sub ictu  
 edoctus peccare furor. gens ista repente  
 erumpens solidumque rotis transvecta per Histrum 270  
 venerat et siccas inciderat orbita lymphas.  
 hanc tu directus per Dacica rura vagantem  
 contra is, aggredieris, superas, includis; et ut te  
 metato spatio castrorum Serdica vidit,  
 obsidione premis. quae te sic tempore multo 275

271. siccas *Mohr*: sectas *codd.*: strictas *Rosberg*, tectas  
*Buecheler*.

<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps "a larger eye." *Perspicua* is possibly used  
*metri gratia* for *perspicacia*, "clear-sighted"; but I have not  
 found any parallel for such a use.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* the nostrils.

<sup>3</sup> The paradoxical description of frozen rivers, etc. as "dry"  
 or "solid" water is common in the Latin poets: cf. 5. 512, 7.  
 150. The notion of wheels traversing the water is derived  
 from Virgil (*Georg.* III. 360 sq.), and is worked to death by  
 the post-Augustans. Cf. 5. 519; similarly of riders, 7. 43.

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lucid pin-points in those sunken wells give all the service that an ampler light<sup>1</sup> could bring. Moreover, the nostrils, while still soft, are blunted by an encircling band, to prevent the two passages<sup>2</sup> from growing outward between the cheek-bones, that thus they may make room for the helmets; for those children are born for battles, and a mother's love disfigures them, because the area of the cheeks stretches and expands when the nose does not intervene. The rest of the men's bodies is comely; chest large and firm, fine shoulders, compact stomach beneath the flanks. On foot their stature is middling, but it towers aloft if you view them on horseback: thus are they often deemed long of frame when seated. Scarce has the infant learnt to stand without his mother's aid when a horse takes him on his back. You would think the limbs of man and beast were born together, so firmly does the rider always stick to the horse, just as if he were fastened to his place: any other folk is carried on horseback, this folk lives there. Shapely bows and arrows are their delight, sure and terrible are their hands; firm is their confidence that their missiles will bring death, and their frenzy is trained to do wrongful deeds with blows that never go wrong. This people had burst forth in a sudden invasion; they had come, crossing with wheels the solid Danube, marking the moistureless waters with ruts.<sup>3</sup> Straight against them didst thou go, as they roamed through the Dacian fields; thou didst attack and vanquish and hem them in; and soon as *Serdica*<sup>4</sup> beheld thee with thine encampment laid out, thou didst straitly besiege them. The town marvelled at thee as thou didst

<sup>4</sup> *Serdica*. Near the modern Sofia.

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in vallo positum stupuit, quod miles in agros  
 nec licitis nec furtivis excursibus ibat.  
 cui deesset cum saepe Ceres semperque Lyacus,  
 disciplina tamen non defuit; inde propinquo  
 hoste magis timuere ducem. sic denique factum est  
 ut socius tum forte tuus, mox proditor, illis 281  
 frustra terga daret commissae tempore pugnae.  
 qui iam cum fugeret flexo pede cornua nudans,  
 tu stabas acies solus, te sparsa fugaci  
 expetiit ductore manus, te Marte pedestri 285  
 sudantem repetebat eques, tua signa secutus  
 non se desertum sensit certamine miles.

I nunc et veteris profer praeconia Tulli,  
 aetas cana patrum, quod pulchro hortamine mendax  
 occuluit refugi nutantia foedera Metti! 290  
 nil simile est fallique tuum tibi non placet hostem.  
 tunc vicit miles, dum se putat esse iuvandum:  
 hic vicit postquam se comperit esse relictum.  
 dux fugit: insequeris; renovat certamina: vincis;  
 clauditur: expugnas; elabitur: obruis atque 295  
 Sarmaticae paci pretium sua funera ponis.  
 paretur; iussum subiit iam transfuga letum  
 atque peregrino cecidit tua victima ferro.  
 ecce iterum, si forte placet, conflige, vetustas!

<sup>1</sup> See Livy I. 27 f. *Metti* may be gen. sing. of *Mellius* (the usual form) or of *Mettus* (Verg. *Aen.* VIII. 642).

<sup>2</sup> It seems clear from v. 297 that the *dux* here mentioned is the deserter. *Sua* in v. 296 is equal to *eius*, as often in Sidonius.

<sup>3</sup> *Sarm.*, i.e. with the Hunnish forces.

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tarry thus for long within the rampart, because thy soldiers went not forth into the fields in regular or stealthy raids. Though oft they lacked corn and always wine, they lacked not discipline; hence though the foe was nigh they feared their general more. So at length it came to pass that he who chanced to be thine ally then but straightway played thee false gained nothing when he retreated before the foe at the first onset; for when he had begun to flee, turning aside and laying bare the wings, thou didst stand thy ground, a host in thyself; to thee did those warriors rally whom their captain's flight had scattered, back to thee came the cavalry as thou didst toil and sweat, fighting on foot; and following thy standards the soldiers felt that they were not deserted in the fray.

Go to now, ancient generation of our fathers! Proclaim, if ye will, the praises of old Tullus, for that he lied in a noble exhortation and concealed the collapse of the treaty with the deserter Mettus!<sup>1</sup> There is nothing like that here; thou, Anthemius, wouldst not choose to have even thine enemy misled. Those old-time soldiers conquered in the belief that they would be aided; but these conquered in the knowledge that they were deserted. The captain<sup>2</sup> flees; thou dost pursue; he renews the fray; thou conquerest; he shuts himself in; thou dost storm his entrenchment; he slips away; thou dost overwhelm him, and dost demand his life as the price of peace with the Sarmatians.<sup>3</sup> Thy will is done, and straightway the deserter has suffered the death decreed and has fallen—thy victim, though slain by a foreign sword. Come now, Antiquity! Enter the contest once more, if it please thee!

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Hannibal ille ferox ad poenam forte petitus, 300  
 etsi non habuit ius vitae sine supremo,  
 certe habuit mortis: quem caecus carcer et uncus  
 et quem exspectabat fracturus guttura lictor,  
 hausit Bebrycio constantior hospite virus;  
 nam te qui fugit, mandata morte peremptus, 305  
 non tam victoris periit quam iudicis ore.

Nunc ades, o Pacan, lauro cui grypas obuncos  
 docta lupata ligant quotiens per frondea lora  
 flectis penniferos hederis bicoloribus armos;  
 huc converte chelyn: non est modo dicere tempus  
 Pythona exstinctum nec bis septena sonare 311  
 vulnera Tantalidum, quorum tibi funera servat  
 cantus et aeterno vivunt in carmine mortes.  
 vos quoque, Castalides, paucis, quo numine nobis  
 venerit Anthemius gemini cum foedere regni, 315  
 pandite: pax rerum misit qui bella gubernet.

Auxerat Augustus naturae lege Severus  
 divorum numerum. quem mox Oenotria casum  
 vidit ut aerei de rupibus Appennini,  
 pergit caerulei vitreas ad Thybridis aedes, 320  
 non galea conclusa genas (nec sutilis illi

<sup>1</sup> *Forte*, "as it so happened," is sometimes little more than "padding." Servius alleges that Virgil has so used it in two places; the allegation would be truer of Sidonius. I have translated it where possible.

<sup>2</sup> Prusias of Bithynia. Hannibal took poison to avoid falling into the hands of the Romans, when Prusias sought to betray him.

<sup>3</sup> *Nam* = "but," as in several other places. The use is common in late Latin, and its germ can be found in Cicero. See Schmalz-Hofmann, *Synt.*, p. 679.

<sup>4</sup> *Modo*, "now," as often in these poems.

<sup>5</sup> For the varying accounts of the number of Niobe's children see the note in Sir J. G. Frazer's trans. of Apollodorus in this series, Vol. I, p. 340.



## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

When the surrender of the bold Hannibal was claimed by those that would punish him,<sup>1</sup> though in that last hour he had not power to live, yet had he power to determine his death; and so, when the dark dungeon awaited him, and the iron hook, and the lictor appointed to break the prisoner's neck, he swallowed the poison, a stauncher man than his Bithynian host<sup>2</sup>: but<sup>3</sup> the man that deserted thee was cut off by a death that had been commanded, and it was a judge's rather than a victor's lips that sealed his doom.

Now grant thy presence, Paeon Apollo, whose hook-beaked gryphons the well-schooled curb doth constrain with its bond of laurel, whensoever thou wieldest thy leafy reins and guidest their winged shoulders with double-hued ivy! Hither direct thy lyre! It is not now<sup>4</sup> the time to sing of Python's destruction or to hymn the twice seven wounds of the Niobids<sup>5</sup>—victims whose dooms are preserved to thine honour in song, so that their deaths live in deathless pocsy. Ye Muses, likewise, reveal in brief words by what divine power Anthemius came to us with a covenant made by the two realms; an empire's peace hath sent him to conduct our wars.

By nature's law Severus had been added to the ranks of the gods.<sup>6</sup> Oenotria,<sup>7</sup> when from the crags of towering Apennine she beheld this calamity, hied her to the glassy abode of blue Tiber. She had not encased her cheeks in a helmet (and she wore no

<sup>6</sup> Libius Severus was Emperor from 19th Nov., A.D. 461, to 15th Aug., 465. Some said that he was murdered by Ricimer, and *naturae lege* may be meant as an emphatic denial of this (probably unfounded) allegation. See Hodgkin, II. 432.

<sup>7</sup> *Oenotria*, old and poetical name for Italy, here treated as a goddess.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

circulus inpactis loricam texuit hamis),  
 sed nudata caput; pro crine racemifer exit  
 plurima per frontem constringens oppida palmes,  
 perque umeros teretes, rutilantes perque lacertos 325  
 pendula gemmiferæ mordebant suppara bullæ.  
 segnior incedit senio venerandaque membra  
 viticomam retinens baculi vice flectit ad ulmum.  
 sed tamen Vbertas sequitur: quacumque propinquat,  
 incessu fecundat iter; comitalaque gressum 330  
 laeta per impressas rorat Vindemia plantas.

Ilicet ingreditur Tiberini gurgitis antrum.  
 currebat fluvius residens et harundinis altae  
 concolor in viridi fluitabat silva capillo;  
 dat sonitum mento unda cadens, licet hispida saetis  
 suppositis multum sedaret barba fragorem; 336  
 pectore ructabat latices lapsuque citato  
 sulcabat madidam iam torrens alveus alvum.  
 terretur veniente dea manibusque remissis  
 remus et urna cadunt. veniae tum verba paranti 340  
 illa prior: "venio viduatam praesule nostro  
 per te, si placeat, lacrimis inflectere Romam:  
 expelat Auroræ partes fastuque remoto  
 hoc unum praestet, iam plus dignetur amari.  
 instrue quas quaerat vires orbique iacenti 345

<sup>1</sup> She wore a crown of towers, representing in this case the Italian towns. The goddess Roma also has a towered crown (p. 392).

<sup>2</sup> The meaning "straightway" may be intended, but it does not quite suit the previous paragraph. Sidonius has a peculiar use of *ilicet*, found in 15. 42 and in at least nine of the ten passages where it occurs in the *Epistles*. There it is a particle of transition, with the force of "so," "so then," "well," sometimes "in short." For a discussion of the subject see Mohr's pamphlet, *Zu Apollinaris Sidonius*, Bremerhaven 1886. The meaning "straightway" will serve in most passages of the Poems where the word occurs.

## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

hauberk fashioned with stitched rings of tight-driven hooks), but bared was her head. Instead of hair there overran her forehead a vine-branch with clustered grapes, binding fast her many towns,<sup>1</sup> and along her shapely shoulders and radiant arms jewelled brooches gripped her flowing robe. The slowness of old age was in her gait, and she held as a staff an elm covered with vine-foliage, and guided her venerable limbs thereby. Yet Abundance attended her; wherever she drew nigh, with her coming she spread fruitfulness over her path, and Vintage, accompanying her steps, joyfully made the juice rise wherever her feet trod.

So<sup>2</sup> she entered the cave of Tiber's stream. There sat the running river.<sup>3</sup> On his green hair drifted a like-hued clump of tall reeds. The water sounded as it fell from his chin, though a beard of shaggy bristles underneath did much to dull the roar. From his breast he threw out streams, and falling more rapidly the flood now furious furrowed his soaking stomach. As the goddess drew nigh fear seized him; his hands relaxed, and the urn and the oar fell from them. He was devising words of excuse when she broke in: "I come that through thee, if it please thee, I may sway by my tears Rome, now bereft of our ruler. I would have her turn to the region of Dawn; let her put her disdain aside and by granting this one thing deserve even greater love. Teach her what strength she must enlist, and tell her in what world she must crave

<sup>3</sup> A feeble paradox, somewhat toned down in the translation. The river-god is identified with the river in *currebat* and distinguished from it in *residens*.

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quo poscat die orbe caput. quemcumque creavit  
 axe meo natum, confestim fregit in illo  
 imperii Fortuna rotas. hinc Vandalus hostis  
 urget et in nostrum numerosa classe quotannis  
 militat excidium, conversoque ordine fati 350  
 torrida Caucasos infert mihi Byrsa furores.  
 praeterea invictus Ricimer, quem publica fata  
 respiciunt, proprio solus vix Marte repellit  
 piratam per rura vagum, qui proelia vitans  
 victorem fugitivus agit. quis sufferat hostem 355  
 qui pacem pugnamque negat? nam foedera nulla  
 cum Ricimere iacit. quem cur nimis oderit audi.  
 incertum crepat ille patrem, cum serva sit illi  
 certa parens; nunc, ut regis sit filius, effert  
 matris adulterium. tum livet quod Ricimerem 360  
 in regnum duo regna vocant; nam patre Suebus,  
 a genetrice Getes. simul et reminiscitur illud,  
 quod Tartesiatis avus huius Vallia terris  
 Vandalicas turmas et iuncti Martis Halanos  
 stravit et occiduum texere cadavera Calpen. 365  
 quid veteres narrare fugas, quid damna priorum?

<sup>1</sup> Geiseric took Carthage in A.D. 439 and made it his capital. Byrsa is properly the citadel of Carthage. The epithet *Caucasos* is very loose; the Vandals had not come from the region of the Caucasus, though the Alans, who were now subjects of the Vandal king, had done so.

<sup>2</sup> *piratam*: cf. v. 17. Geiseric was an incorrigible pirate, even when he was not actually at war. It was an attack by him on the Peloponnese that finally induced Leo to concert a gigantic offensive of East and West against him and to make Anthemius Emperor of the West. Shortly before this (461-465) Geiseric had made a series of devastating descents upon Italy and Sicily. The joint expedition, of which Sidonius speaks so hopefully, came to a disastrous end in A.D. 468, owing mainly to the incompetence of the commander-in-chief, Basiliscus.

## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

a head for her own stricken world. Whenever Fortune hath chosen a man born in my clime, she hath instantly broken the wheels of his empire. On this side the Vandal foe presses hard; and every year he wars with multitudinous navy to destroy us; the natural order hath been reversed, and now parched Byrsá launches against me the frenzy of the Caucasus.<sup>1</sup> Yea more, unconquerable Ricimer, to whom the destiny of our nation looks for safety, doth barely drive back with his own unaided force the pirate<sup>2</sup> that ranges over our lands, that ever avoids battles and plays a conqueror's part by flight. Who could brook an enemy that refuses both concord and combat? For never does he make a treaty with Ricimer. Hear now why he hates our leader with such exceeding hate.<sup>3</sup> His father is unknown, yet he prates ever of him, since 'tis well known his mother was a slave-woman.<sup>4</sup> So now, to make himself out a king's son, he proclaims his mother's shame. He is jealous also because two kingdoms call Ricimer to kingly power, Suevian as he is on the father's side,<sup>5</sup> Gothic on the mother's. He likewise remembers this, that Wallia,<sup>6</sup> grandsire of Ricimer, laid low on Spanish soil the Vandal squadrons and the Alans, their comrades in the war, and their corpses covered Calpe in the far west. But why tell of ancient routs, of the losses of bygone generations? Nay, he calls

<sup>1</sup> Geiserio's feud with Ricimer was not due merely to the causes mentioned here. See Hodgkin, II. 434 f.

<sup>2</sup> Geiserio's father was Godigiselas, a king of the Asding Vandals.

<sup>3</sup> Ricimer's father was a Suevian chief.

<sup>4</sup> The Visigoth Wallia, father of Ricimer's mother, annihilated the Siling Vandals in Spain and crushed their allies the Alans, the remnant of whom took refuge with the Asding Vandals in Gallaecia (A.D. 416-418). See *Introd.*, p. xi.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Agrigentini recolit dispendia campi.  
 inde furit, quod se docuit satis iste nepotem  
 illius esse viri quo viso, Vandale, semper  
 terga dabas. nam non Siculis inlustrior arvis 370  
 tu, Marcelle, redis, per quem tellure marique  
 nostra Syracusios presserunt arma penates;  
 nec tu cui currum Curii superare, Metelle,  
 contigit, ostentans nobis elephantia frequentem,  
 grex niger albentes tegeter cum mole iugales 375  
 auctorenique suum celaret pompa triumphi.  
 Noricus Ostrogothum quod continet, iste timetur;  
 Gallia quod Rheni Martem ligat, iste pavori est;  
 quod consanguineo me Vandalus hostis Italano  
 diripuit radente, suis hic ultus ab armis. 380  
 sed tamen unus homo est nec tanta pericula solus  
 tollere, sed differe potest: modo principe nobis  
 est opus armato, veterum qui more parentum  
 non mandet sed bella gerat, quem signa moventem  
 terra vel unda tremant, ut tandem iure recepto 385  
 Romula desuetas moderentur classica classes."

Audiit illa pater, simul annuit. itur in urbem.  
 continuo videt ipse deam, summissus adorat,  
 pectus et exsertam tetigerunt cornua mammam;

382. sed : si *Buecheler*.

<sup>1</sup> Ricimer with his fleet frustrated an attempted raid by Geiseric on Agrigentum and afterwards defeated him in Corsican waters, A.D. 456. See *Introd.*, p. xxi; Bury, I. 327.

<sup>2</sup> Marcellus, the capturer of Syracuse (212 B.C.).

<sup>3</sup> Manius Curius Dentatus, conqueror of Pyrrhus (275 B.C.), had four elephants at his triumph (*Eutrop.* II. 14); L. Caecilius

## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

to mind the havoc of Agrigentum's plain.<sup>1</sup> Madly he rages because his adversary has amply proved himself the grandchild of that hero at sight of whom the Vandal did ever turn in flight. No whit more glorious didst thou, Marcellus,<sup>2</sup> return from Sicilian lands, thou through whom our arms did beset the homes of Syracuse by land and sea; or thou, Metellus, whose fortune it was to outdo the triumph of Curius,<sup>3</sup> when thou didst display to us a throng of elephants, and the dusky herd screened the white chariot-steeds with their mighty bulk, and the triumphal parade hid the winner of the triumph. If the Norican is restraining the Ostrogoth, it is that Ricimer is feared; if Gaul ties down the armed might of the Rhine, it is he that inspires the dread; and because the Vandal foe plundered me while the Alan, his kinsman, swept off what remained, this man took vengeance by the force of his own arms. But he is only one man; alone he cannot remove these perils, but only delay their day; we need now an armed prince who in the manner of our sires shall not order wars but wage them,<sup>4</sup> one before whom land and sea shall quake when he advances his standards, so that at last with power regained the Roman war-trump may direct Rome's dormant navies."

Father Tiber heard and heeded. To the city he went and straightway with his own eyes beheld the goddess, and bowed in humble adoration, so that his horns touched her breast and her uncovered bosom.

Metellus had many (authorities differ as to the number) when he triumphed after defeating the Carthaginians at Panormus (250 B.C.).

<sup>4</sup> This anticipation was not fulfilled. Anthemius did not personally take part in the great expedition against Geiseric.

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mandatas fert inde preces ; quas diva secuta      390  
 apparat ire viam. laxatos torva capillos  
 stringit et inclusae latuerunt casside tures ;  
 infula laurus erat. bullis hostilibus asper  
 applicat a laeva surgentem balteus ensem.  
 inseritur clipeo victrix manus ; illius orbem      395  
 Martigenae, lupa, Thybris, Amor, Mars, Ilia  
 complent.  
 fibula mordaci refugas a pectore vestes  
 dente capit. micat hasta minax, quercusque tropaeis  
 curva tremit placitoque deam sub fascie fatigat.  
 perpetuo stat planta solo, sed fascia primos      400  
 sistitur ad digitos, retinacula bina cothurnis  
 mittit in adversum vineto de fomite pollex,  
 quae stringant crepidas et concurrentibus ansis  
 vinclorum pandas texant per crura catenas.  
 ergo sicut erat liquidam transvecta per aethram      405  
 nascentis petiit tepidos Hyperionis ortus.  
 Est locus Oceani, longinquis proximus Indis,  
 axe sub Eoo, Nabataeum tensus in Eurum :  
 ver ibi continuum est, interpellata nec ullis

399. placitoque *Drakenborch* : placidoque *codd.*, *def.*  
*Semple.*

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<sup>1</sup> *fascia* (= confining band) is evidently applied here to the sole of the sandal: cf. *Epist.* VIII. 11. 3, *carm.* v. 13, *fasciata*. It cannot mean a *fascia pedulis*, which did not come near the front of the foot. The meaning is that the leather of the sole is not continued upwards over the toes to form uppers. Two thongs encircle the great toe and are passed cross-wise through large leather loops, which are attached to the sole and form a network on both sides of the foot when the laces have drawn them tight. After passing through the last pair of loops these shoe-strings were passed round the leg and fastened. The *vincla* are the laces, and



## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

Then he delivered his message of entreaty, and the goddess, compliant, made ready for the journey. Stern was her look as she bound up her flowing hair; then she shut in her towers and hid them under a helmet; laurel formed her fillet. Her belt, rough with shield-studs taken from enemies, made fast a sword, which rose high on her left side. Her conquering arm was thrust into a shield, whose orb was filled with the twin sons of Mars, with the wolf and Tiber and Love and Mars and Ilia. A clasp fixes with gripping tooth the raiment that retreats back from her breast. Her threatening spear flashes, and an oak bowed down with trophies sways and tires the goddess under its welcome burden. The covering of her sole is of one piece,<sup>1</sup> but this strip is not carried beyond the tips of the toes; the great toe sends two strings upward from its encircled socket in opposite directions, so that they bind the sandal tight and, with the side-loops drawn together, weave a curving mesh of ties up the leg. In this guise, then, she was wafted through the clear bright air, seeking the warm rising-place of the nascent sun.

There is a region by Ocean's shore, nigh to the distant Indians, under the eastern sky, stretching towards the Nabataean<sup>2</sup> wind. Perpetual spring is there, the ground is not made pale by any invading

v. 404 seems to refer to the pattern which they and the converging loops make along the instep rather than to the whole network of thongs which, as explained above, covered both sides of the foot. It is unfortunate that Sidonius uses both *cothurnus* and *crepida* for the same thing; the latter is by far the more appropriate word.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. eastern; cf. Ovid *Met.* I. 61; Lucan IV. 63. The Nabataei were a people of Arabia Petraea. In 5. 284 the second vowel of *Nabataeus* is long.

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frigoribus pallescit humus, sed flore perenni 410  
 picta peregrinos ignorant arva rigores;  
 halant rura rosis, indiscriptosque per agros  
 fragrat odor; violam, cytisum, serpylla, ligustrum,  
 lilia, narcissos, casiam, colocasia, caltas,  
 costum, malobathrum, myrrhas, opobalsama, tura 415  
 parturiunt canipi; nec non pulsante senecta  
 hinc rediviva petit vicinus cinnama Phoenix.  
 hic domus Aurorae rutilo crustante metallo  
 bacarum praefert leves asprata lapillos.  
 diripiunt diversa oculos et ab arte magistra 420  
 hoc vincit, quodcumque vides; sed conditur omnis  
 sub domina praesente decor, nimioque rubore  
 gemmarum varios perdit quia possidet ignes.  
 fundebat coma pexa crocos flexoque lacerto  
 lutea depressus comebat tempora pecten. 425  
 fundebant oculi radios; color igneus illis,  
 non tamen ardor erat, quamvis de nocte recussa  
 excepti soleant sudorem fingere rores.  
 pectora bis cingunt zonae, parvisque papillis  
 invidiam facit ipse sinus; pars extima pepi 430  
 perfert puniceas ad crura rubentia rugas.

412. indiscriptosque *Mohr et Lactjohann*: indescriptosquo.

413. fragrat *F*, flagrat *CPT*.

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<sup>1</sup> The phoenix gathers all kinds of fragrant herbs to be burnt with him on his "life-giving pyre" (*Lactant. Phoen.* 90). In this connexion Sidonius never fails to mention cinnamon; see 7. 353, 9. 325, 11. 125, 22. 50; cf. *Lactant. Phoen.* 83.

<sup>2</sup> Here dawn and the goddess of dawn are mixed up, like the Tiber and the Tiber-god in v. 333. The dew of dawn looks like sweat, but is not sweat; for the rays of Dawn

## II. PANEGRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

seasons of cold; the fields bedizened with ever-blooming flowers know not the frosts of strange lands. The countryside is fragrant with roses, and throughout those unowned and undivided fields a sweet aroma breathes. The plains ever bring forth - violets, clover, thyme, privet, lilies, narcissus, casia, culcas, marigold, costum, malobathrum, myrrh, balm, frankincense. Yea, when old age knocks at his door, the phoenix that dwells hard by seeks from hence the cinnamon that brings a new life.<sup>1</sup> Here the home of Aurora, overlaid with plates of flashing gold, displays withal smooth pearls on its broken surface. On all sides are things to capture the gaze, and, thanks to their masterly artistry, whatsoever meets the eye seems to surpass the rest. But all that beauty is dimmed in the presence of its mistress, who with her blushing radiance destroys the diverse fires of the gems, because she has fires of her own. Her combed hair poured forth saffron hues; her arm was bent as the comb sank in and arranged the yellow tresses on her temples. Her eyes poured forth rays; fiery their hue, but the heat of fire was not there, although when night is shaken off the dewes received from it are wont to have a semblance of sweat.<sup>2</sup> Her bosom was girdled by a double band, and even the fold in her robe mocked the smallness of her breasts.<sup>3</sup> The lower part of the dress extended its crimson folds down to her rosy knees.

(Aurora), which are diffused from her eyes, have no heat in their fiery glow: morning receives its dew from the departing night, not from the dawn.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning is not clear. Possibly "made her small breasts envious," though *invidiam facere* regularly means "to bring reproach upon."

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sic regina sedet solio; sceptri vice dextram  
 lampadis hasta replet; Nox adstat proxima divae,  
 iam refugos conversa pedes, ac pone tribunal  
 promit Lux summum vix intellecta cacumen. 435  
 hinc Romam liquido venientem tramite cernens  
 exsiluit propere et blandis prior orsa loquellis  
 "quid, caput o mundi," dixit, "mea regna revisis?  
 quidve iubes?" paulum illa silens atque aspera  
     miscens  
 mitibus haec coepit: "venio (desiste moveri 440  
 nec multum trepida), non ut mihi pressus Araxes  
 imposito sub ponte fluat nec ut ordine prisco  
 Indicus Ausonia potetur casside Ganges,  
 aut ut tigriferi pharetrata per arva Niphatis  
 depopuletur ovans Artaxata Caspia consul. 445  
 non Pori modo regna precor nec ut hisce lacertis  
 frangat Hydaspeas aries incontactus Erythras.  
 non in Bactra feror nec committentia pugnas  
 nostra Semiramiae rident ad classica portae.  
 Arsacias non quaero domus nec tessera castris 450  
 in Ctesiphonta datur. totum hunc tibi cessimus  
     axem:

446. Pori *Sirmondus*: phari(i).

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<sup>1</sup> Rome asserts that she has not come to reclaim her old eastern conquests.

<sup>2</sup> Araxes, in Armenia. Augustus is said to have built a bridge over it. Cf. Verg. *Aen.* VIII. 728.

<sup>3</sup> The Romans had never conquered any part of India. But here and in vv. 446 f. Rome may merely be indicating that she does not intend to emulate Alexander the Great.

<sup>4</sup> *Erythraeus* is often used by poets for Indian (from the mare *Erythraeum*, which, in the largest sense of the term, extended to the coast of India). Sidonius seems to have invented the town of Erythrae; cf. 5. 285, 11. 105, 22. 22. In 7. 354 *Erythraeus* really means "Arabian"; the vague geography of the poets often merges Arabia or Aethiopia with

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Thus she sits, a queen on her throne, but instead of sceptre the shaft of a lamp fills her right hand. Night stands near the goddess, with her feet already turning to flee, and behind the dais Light scarce perceived is beginning to reveal the topmost peak.

When from hence the goddess saw Rome drawing nigh through the cloudless air, she sprang up in haste and was the first to speak, thus beginning with kindly words: "O head of the world, why dost thou revisit my kingdom? What are thy commands?"

The other was silent for a brief space, then thus began, mingling harsh and gentle phrase:<sup>1</sup> "I come (cease to be thus perturbed, and be not grievously alarmed), not that Araxes,<sup>2</sup> mastered by me, may have to flow beneath a bridge forced upon it, nor that in the ancient manner the Indian Ganges<sup>3</sup> may be drunk from an Italian helmet, nor that a consul, ranging through the fields of tiger-haunted Niphates, home of archers, may triumphantly despoil Artaxata by the Caspian Sea. I do not now beg for the realm of Porus, nor that these arms may thrust a battering-ram to shatter Erythrae<sup>4</sup> on the bank of the Hydaspes. I am not hurling myself against Bactra, nor are the gates of Semiramis' town<sup>5</sup> laughing to hear our trumpets starting the fight. I crave not the palaces of Persian kings, nor is word being passed in camp of mine to march on Ctesiphon. All this region<sup>6</sup> we have yielded up to thee. Do I not even

India; so in another reference to the Phoenix, 9. 325; the same bird appears among the Indian captives of Bacchus, 22. 50.

<sup>5</sup> i.e. of Babylon, which had, however, decayed after the death of Alexander the Great. For the contemptuous refusal to close the gates see n. on v. 80.

<sup>6</sup> For the boundaries of the eastern and western Empires as finally settled after the death of Theodosius (A.D. 395) see Gibbon, c. 29 init., Hodgkin, I. 677-8.

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et nec sic mereor nostram ut tucare senectam?  
 omne quod Euphraten Tigrimque interiacet olim  
 sola tenes: res empta mihi est de sanguine Crassi,  
 ad Carrhas pretium scripsi; nec inulta remansi 455  
 aut periit sic emptus ager; si fallo, probasti,  
 Ventidio mactate Sapor. nec sufficit istud:  
 Armenias Pontumque dedi, quo Marte petitem  
 dicat Sulla tibi; forsan non creditur uni:  
 consule Lucillum. taceo iam Cycladas omnes: 460  
 adquisita meo servit tibi Creta Metello.  
 transcripsi Cilicas: hos Magnus fuderat olim.  
 adieci Syriac, quos nunc moderaris, Isauros:  
 hos quoque sub nostris domuit Servilius armis.  
 concessi Aetolos veteres Acheloiacque arva, 465  
 transfudi Attalicum male credula testamentum;  
 Epirum retines: tu scis cui debeat illam  
 Pyrrhus. in Illyricum specto te mittere iura  
 ac Macetum terras: et habes tu, Paule, nepotes.  
 Aegypti frumenta dedi: mihi vicerat olim 470  
 Leucadiis Agrippa fretis. Iudaea tenetur  
 sub dicione tua, tamquam tu miseris illuc  
 insignem cum patre Titum. tibi Cypria merces  
 fertur: pugnaces ego pauper laudo Catones.  
 Dorica te tellus et Achaica rura tremiscunt, 475

475. rura *Mohr*: iura.

<sup>1</sup> Three Persian kings had borne the name Sapor (Shāpūr), but Sidonius uses it to denote any Persian, or rather Parthian, king or prince. It was Pacorus, son of Orodes I, who was defeated and slain by P. Ventidius Bassus in 38 B.C. See n. on 7. 99.

<sup>2</sup> Attalus III of Pergamum, who died in 133 B.C., bequeathed, or was said to have bequeathed, his dominions to the Romans; hence arose the Roman province of Asia.

<sup>3</sup> L. Aemilius Paullus defeated Perseus of Macedon at Pydna (168 B.C.).

## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

thus deserve that thou protect mine old age? All that lies between Euphrates and Tigris thou hast long possessed alone; yet that possession was bought by me with the blood of Crassus; at Carrhae I paid down the price; nor did I remain unavenged nor lose the land thus bought; if my word is not good, Sapor<sup>1</sup> hath proved it, slain by Ventidius. Nor is this enough. I gave up the Armenias and Pontus—by what martial might assailed, let Sulla tell thee; perchance one man's word is not enough, then ask Lucullus. I keep silence now about all the Cyclades—but Crete, which my Metellus won, is thrall to thee. I made over to thee the Cilicians, yet Magnus had routed them long ago. To Syria I added the Isaurians, whom thou governest now, yet these likewise Servilius subdued beneath our arms. I yielded up to thee Aetolia's ancient race and the lands where Achelous flows; with ill-starred trustfulness I handed over to thee the bequest of Attalus.<sup>2</sup> Thou dost hold Epirus, though thou knowest who won the title to it from Pyrrhus. I see thee extending thy rule to Illyricum and the land of the Macedonians, and yet descendants of Paulus<sup>3</sup> still live. I gave thee the corn of Egypt, though Agrippa had conquered the land for me long since in the strait of Leucas.<sup>4</sup> Judea is held beneath thy sway, as if it were thou that hadst sent there the glorious Titus and his sire. To thee is the revenue of Cyprus brought, while I in poverty belaud my warlike Catos.<sup>5</sup> The Dorian land and Achaia's fields tremble before thee, and thou stretch-

<sup>4</sup> i.e. at the battle of Actium.

<sup>5</sup> The younger Cato ("Uticensis") was sent to Cyprus in 58 B.C. to annex the island.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

tendis et in bimarem felicia regna Corinthon :  
dic, Byzantinus quis rem tibi Mummius egit?

“ Sed si forte placet veteres sopire querellas,  
Anthemium concede mihi. sit partibus istis  
Augustus longumque Leo; mea iura gubernet 480  
quem petii; patrio vestiri murice natam  
gaudeat Euphemiam sidus divale parentis.  
adice praeterea privatum ad publica foedus:  
sit socer Augustus genero Ricimere beatus;  
nobilitate micant: est vobis regia virgo, 485  
regius ille mihi. si concors annuis istud,  
mox Libyam sperare dabis. circumspice taedas  
antiquas: par nulla tibi sic copula praesto est.  
proferat hic veterum thalamos discrimine partos  
Graecia, ni pudor est: reparatis Pisa quadrigis 490  
suscitet Oenomaum, natae quem fraude cadentem  
cerea destituit resolutis axibus obex;  
procedat Colchis prius agnita virgo marito  
crimine quam sexu; spectet de carcere circi  
pallentes Atalanta procos et poma decori 495  
Hippomenis iam non pro solo colligat auro;  
Deianira, tuas Achelous gymnade pinguis  
inlustret taedas et ab Hercule pressus anhelos

<sup>1</sup> See 195-7.

<sup>2</sup> Alypia, daughter of Anthemius, was married to Ricimer in 467 A.D. Sidonius reached Rome in the midst of the celebrations (*Epist.* 1. 5. 10).

<sup>3</sup> i.e. by the defeat of Geiseric.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 14. 12, 23. 392.

<sup>5</sup> Medea: *crimine* refers to the murder of her brother Absyrtus (see 5. 132-7).

<sup>6</sup> i.e. not merely on account of the gold, as on the first occasion, but because she would fain have Hippomenes win.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. 11. 87, 14. 16-20. The struggle of Achelous with Hercules for the possession of Deianira is often mentioned in



## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

est thy prosperous sovereignty to where Corinth lies between the two seas: pray tell me this—what Byzantine Mummius did this work for thee?

“But if haply it please thee to lay old grievances to rest, grant me Anthemius. In these lands let Leo bē emperor, and long may he reign! But let my laws be in the hands of him whom I have asked of thee; and let the star of her deified father rejoice that Euphemia his daughter is robed in the purple of her ancestors!<sup>1</sup> Add also a private compact to our public one: let a parent who is Emperor be blessed by having his daughter wedded to Ricimer.<sup>2</sup> Both shine with the lustre of high rank; in her ye have a royal lady, in him I have a man of royal blood. If thou dost willingly agree to this, thou shalt permit me to hope for Libya<sup>3</sup> anon. Survey the nuptials of olden time, and no union such as this event can offer itself to thy view. Here let Greece bring forward, unless she be ashamed, those marriages of her ancients which were won by peril. Let Pisa bring back her four-horse chariot and revive Oenomaus,<sup>4</sup> who fell by a daughter's guile, when the waxen lynch-pins betrayed him, unloosing the axles; let the maid of Colchis<sup>5</sup> come forward, who was brought to her husband's knowledge by her crime before he knew her as a woman; let Atalanta gaze on her pale suitors from the starting-place in the circus and no longer gather the apples of the comely Hippomenes for their gold alone<sup>6</sup>; let Achelous, with the oil of the wrestling-school upon him, glorify the nuptials of Deianira,<sup>7</sup> and, clasped tightly by the panting Her-

ancient literature. See Sir J. G. Frazer's n. on Apollodorus II. 7. 5 (Vol. I, p. 256 in this series). *Gymnade pinguis* is oddly used of a river-deity.

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## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

lassatum foveat rivis rivalibus hostem :  
 quantumvis repetam veteris conubia saceli, 500  
 transcendunt hic heroas, heroidas illa.  
 hos thalamos, Ricimer, Virtus tibi pronuba poscit  
 atque Dionacam dat Martia laurea myrtum.  
 ergo age, trade virum non otia pigra foventem  
 deliciisque gravem, sed quem modo nauticus urit 505  
 aestus Abydenique sinus et Sestias ora  
 Hellespontiacis circumclamata procellis ;  
 quas pelagi fauces non sic tenuisse vel illum  
 crediderim cui ruptus Athos, cui remige Medo  
 turgida silvosam currebant vela per Alpem ; 510  
 nec Lucullanis sic haec freta cincta carinis,  
 segnis ad insignem sedit cum Cyzicon hostis,  
 qui cogente fame cognata cadavera mandens  
 vixit morte sua. sed quid mea vota retardo ?  
 trade magis." 515

Tum pauca refert Tithonia coniunx :

" duc age, sancta parens, quamquam mihi maximus  
 usus

invicti summiue ducis, dum nitior exstes  
 et non disiunctas melius moderemur habenas.  
 nam si forte placet veterum meminisse laborum,  
 et qui pro patria vestri pugnaret Iuli, 520  
 ut nil plus dicam, prior hinc ego Memnona misi."

Finierant ; geminas iunxit Concordia partes,  
 electo tandem potitur quod principe Roma.

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<sup>1</sup> Anthemius was in command of the fleet in the Hellespont when called to the Imperial throne.

<sup>2</sup> Xerxes.

<sup>3</sup> Sidonius is wrong. It was Mithridates who commanded the sea throughout his disastrous siege of Cyzicus (74-73 B.C.), though his ships could not save him from famine. See also 22. 163-168.

## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

cules, refresh his wearied adversary with spiteful spate: recall as I may the marriages of the olden time, this man excels all the god-descended heroes, she the heroines. Valour hath this union in her charge; she demands it for thee, Ricimer, and thus the laurel of Mars bestows on thee the myrtle of Venus. Come then, deliver to me this man who neither cherishes lazy ease nor is numbed by indulgence, but who even now is harassed by the heaving deep,<sup>1</sup> by the bay of Abydos and the shore of Sestos with the tempests of the Hellespont roaring all around. Not so firmly, methinks, was this narrow sea held even by him<sup>2</sup> who burst through Athos and with his Median oarsmen made his swelling sails rush through wooded mountains; nor was this strait so hemmed by Lucullus' ships<sup>3</sup> when before famed Cyzicus idly lingered that enemy who when hunger pressed him devoured the bodies of his kin and thus lived by the death of his own. But why do I delay the fulfilment of my prayer? Rather deliver him now to me!"

Then answered Tithonus' spouse in these few words: "Come, take him, reverend mother, although I have great need of a mighty and unconquerable leader,—provided that thou wilt now show thyself more kindly, and so we may better wield the reins in joint control. For if haply it please thee to remember the toils of olden days, I was before thee—to mention but this—in sending Memnon<sup>4</sup> hence to fight for the native land of your Iulus."

They had finished, and Concord united the two sides, for Rome at length gained the emperor of her

<sup>4</sup> Memnon, who appears in post-Homeric accounts as an ally of the Trojans, was the son of Tithonus and Eos (Aurora).

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

nunc aliquos voto simili vel amore, vetustas,  
 te legisse crepa, numquam non invida summis 525  
 emeritisque viris. Brenni contra arma Camillum  
 profer ab exilio Cincinnatoque secures  
 expulso Caesone refer flentemque parentem  
 a rastris ad rostra roga, miseroque tumultu  
 pelle prius, quos victa petas; si ruperit Alpes 530  
 Poenus, ad adflictos condemnatosque recurre;  
 improbus ut rubeat Barcina clade Metaurus,  
 multatus tibi consul agat, qui milia fundens  
 Hasdrubalis, rutilum sibi cum fabricaverit ensem,  
 concretum gerat ipse caput. longe altera nostri 535  
 gratia iudicii est: scit se non laesus amari.

Sed mea iam nimii propellunt carbasa flatus;  
 siste, Camena, modos tenues, portumque petenti  
 iam placido sedeat mihi carminis ancora fundo.  
 at tamen, o princeps, quae nunc tibi classis et  
 arma 540  
 tractentur, quam magna geras quam tempore parvo,  
 si mea vota deus produxerit, ordine recto  
 aut genero bis mox aut te ter consule dicam.

537. sed *Lucljohunn*: et.

<sup>1</sup> Camillus was exiled on a charge of having made an unfair division of the booty taken at Veii (Liv. V. 32. 8).

<sup>2</sup> Caeso, son of the great L. Quinctius Cincinnatus, was exiled, and a heavy fine was imposed upon him, which his father had to pay (Liv. III. 11-14). Three years later (458 B.C.), Cincinnatus was summoned from the plough to the dictatorship in order to rescue the Romans from the Aequians (Liv. III. 26-29).

<sup>3</sup> M. Livius Salinator, consul in 219 B.C., condemned on a charge similar to that brought against Camillus (n. on v. 527), retired from Rome to the country and took no part in public

## II. PANEGYRIC ON ANTHEMIUS

choice. And now, Antiquity, thou who art ever jealous of the greatest men and greatest benefactors, prate if thou wilt of choices made by thee with like eagerness and affection! Bring Camillus<sup>1</sup> forth from his exile to confront the arms of Brennus; give Cincinnatus the fasces once more after banishing Caeso, invite the weeping parent from the rake to the rostra,<sup>2</sup> and in miserable discord drive men out, only to seek their help in thine hour of defeat! Should the Carthaginian have burst the Alps asunder, have recourse to men that have been broken and condemned; if the insatiate Metaurus is to be reddened by the defeat of Barca's son, let a consul thou hast fined do the work for thee, and as he routs Hasdrubal's thousands, let him who has fashioned a bloody sword for his use himself show an unkempt head.<sup>3</sup> Far different is the graciousness of our choice; he has never been wronged, but knows that he is loved.<sup>4</sup>

But now too strong are the breezes that drive my sails before them. Check, O Muse, my humble measures, and as I seek the harbour let the anchor of my song settle at last in a calm resting-place. Yet of the fleet and forces that thou, O prince, art handling and of the great deeds thou doest in little time I, if God further my prayers, shall tell in order due in the second consulship of thy daughter's

affairs until he was compelled to return in 210 B.C. He came in the guise of disgrace and mourning, with unkempt hair and matted beard and in shabby attire (Liv. XXVII. 34. 5). He was made consul for the year 207 with C. Claudius Nero, with whom he shared in the victory over Hasdrubal at the Metaurus.

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.* he has not had to suffer injury, like those old Romans, before gaining the love of the people.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

nam modo nos iam festa vocant, et ad Vlpia poscunt  
te fora, donabis quos libertate, Quirites, 545  
quorum gaudentes exceptant verbera malac.  
perge, pater patriae, felix atque omine fausto  
captivos vincture novos absolve vetustos.

### III

#### AD LIBELLVM

Quid faceret laetas segetes, quod tempus amandum  
messibus et gregibus, vitibus atque apibus,  
ad Maecenatis quondam sunt edita nomen;  
hinc, Maro, post audes arma virumque loqui.  
at mihi Petrus erit Maecenas temporis huius; 5  
nam famae pelagus sidere curro suo.  
si probat, emittit, si damnat carmina, celat,  
nec nos ronchisono rhinocerote notat.  
i, liber: hic nostrum tutatur, crede, pudorem;  
hoc censore etiam displicuisse placet. 10

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<sup>1</sup> Ricimer had been consul in A.D. 459.

<sup>2</sup> The forum of Trajan. The public manumission of some slaves was regularly performed by the consuls when they entered upon their office. Cf. Claud. IV. *Cons. Hon.* 612-618. The ceremony included the traditional blow on the cheek (*alapa*), the significance of which is uncertain. See Mr. R. G. Nisbet's interesting paper in *J.R.S.* VIII. 1., pp. 1-14.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. as a result of his coming victory over Geiseric.

<sup>4</sup> These two lines are partly a quotation, partly a paraphrase, of the opening of Virgil's *Georgics*.

### III. TO HIS LITTLE BOOK

husband,<sup>1</sup> or in thy third; but now a festival doth call us, and thy presence at the Ulpian Forum<sup>2</sup> is demanded by those citizens-to-be on whom thou wilt bestow liberty, whose cheeks receive their buffets with joy. Forward, then, Father of thy country, blest of fortune, and with happy omen release old captives, to bind new ones anon.<sup>3</sup>

### III

### TO HIS LITTLE BOOK

What made the cornfields joyous, what season is dear to harvest-crops and flocks, to vines and bees,<sup>4</sup> was once declared in a poem addressed to Maecenas; thereafter, Maro, thou didst dare to sing of "arms and the man." But to me Petrus<sup>5</sup> shall be the Maecenas of this time; for I glide over the sea of fame under his guiding star. If he approves my poems he lets them go forth, if he condemns them, he suppresses them, but he never censures me with the snorting snout of a rhinoceros. Go, then, my book; for believe me, he sustains my bashfulness; with him for censor it is a pleasure even to have displeased.

<sup>5</sup> Petrus, Imperial secretary (*magister epistularum*) under Majorian, a man of some literary ability (see *Carm.* 9. 306 sqq., *Epist.* IX. 13. 4 and the *carmen* which follows). He was evidently instrumental in reconciling the Emperor to Sidonius after the trouble at Lugdunum (Introduct., p. xxxvii), and also in negotiating terms of surrender for the besieged Gallo-Romans and their Burgundian allies: see 5. 564-573.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

## IV

### PRAEFATIO PANEGYRICI DICTI DOMINO IMPERATORI CAESARI IVLIO VALERIO MAIORIANO AVGVSTO

Tityrus ut quondam patulae sub tegmine fagi  
 volveret inflatos murmura per calamos,  
 praestitit adflicto ius vitae Caesar et agri,  
 nec stetit ad tenuem celsior ira reum;  
 sed rus concessum dum largo in principe laudat, 5  
 caelum pro terris rustica Musa dedit;  
 nec fuit inferius Phoebeia dona referre:  
 fecerat hic dominum, fecit et ille deum.  
 et tibi, Flacce, acies Bruti Cassique secuto  
 carminis est auctor qui fuit et veniae. 10  
 sic mihi diverso nuper sub Marte cadenti  
 iussisti invicto, victor, ut essem animo.  
 serviat ergo tibi servati lingua poetae  
 atque meae vitae laus tua sit pretium.  
 non ego mordaci fodiam modo dente Maronem 15  
 nec civem carpam, terra Sabella, tuum.  
 res minor ingenio nobis, sed Cacsare maior;  
 vincant eloquio, dummodo nos domino.

12. invicto victor *Stangl*, erecto victor *Leo*: victor victor.

<sup>1</sup> Verg. *Ecl.* I. 1. Tityrus is, as usual, taken to represent Virgil.

<sup>2</sup> Octavian, as a Triumvir, might be spoken of as angry with Cremona, which supported Brutus and suffered severely when confiscated lands were assigned to the veterans of Philippi. The confiscations were extended to the territory around Mantua, "too near, alas! to hapless Cremona" (Verg. *Ec.* IX. 28), and Virgil was evicted. Thus the "wrath" of Octavian might be said to have extended to Virgil. There is no other authority for the statement in *v.* 4; probably Sidonius is writing from a confused recollection.



## IV. PREFACE TO MAIORIANUS

### IV

#### PREFACE TO THE PANEGYRIC PRO- NOUNCED IN HONOUR OF THE LORD EMPEROR, IULIUS VALERIUS MAIORI- ANUS, CAESAR AUGUSTUS

That Tityrus <sup>1</sup> of old under the canopy of a spreading beech might pour forth his warblings breathed into the reed, Caesar vouchsafed him in his hour of distress the right to live and possess his land, and the wrath of majesty endured not against an humble offender.<sup>2</sup> But the rustic Muse, praising thus a bounteous prince for a farm restored, gave in return for that earthly boon a place in heaven; nor was such repayment with the gifts of Phoebus too poor a recompense, for whereas the one man had made the poet a master of lands, the poet made him a god. To Flaccus likewise, when he had followed the campaigns of Brutus and Cassius, he who was the source of his pardon was also the source of his song.<sup>3</sup> So it is with me; laid prostrate not long since in the ranks of thy foe, I was bidden by thee, my conqueror, to keep an unconquered spirit. So let the tongue of a poet thus preserved yield its service to thee, and let my praises be the recompense for my life. I will not now fix a malignant tooth in Maro or carp at the citizen of the Sabine country. My work must needs be less than theirs in talent, but it is greater in its Caesar. Let them surpass me in the power of utterance, so long as I surpass them in my lord and master.

<sup>3</sup> If this refers to Maecenas, the statement is incredible; Horace was first introduced to Maecenas in 38 B.C. But, as Geisler says (p. 11, n. 5), the context suggests that the reference is to Octavian.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

## V

### PANEGYRICVS

Concipe practeritos, respublica, mente triumphos: —  
 imperium iam consul habet, quem purpura non plus  
 quam lorica operit, cuius diademata frontem  
 non luxu sed lege tegunt, meritisque laborum  
 post palmam palmata venit; decora omnia regni 5  
 accumulans fasces et princeps consule crescit.  
 personat ergo tuum caelo, rure, urbibus, undis  
 exsultans Europa sophos, quod rector haberis,  
 victor qui fueras. fateor, trepidaverat orbis  
 dum non vis vicisse tibi nimioque pudore 10  
 quod regnum mereare doles tristisque repulsa  
 non moderanda subis quae defendenda putasti.

Sederat exserto bellatrix pectore Roma,  
 cristatum turrita caput, cui pone capaci  
 casside prolapsus perfundit terga capillus. 15

<sup>1</sup> Delivered at Lugdunum late in the year 458. See Introd., p. xxxvii.

<sup>2</sup> The *tunica palmata*: n. on 2. 6 f.

<sup>3</sup> These words seem to be a flattering reference to the interval between April 1 and December 28, 457. The date of Majorian's accession is a vexed problem; see Stein, p. 554 n. and N. Baynes in *Journ. Rom. Stud.* XII (1922), pp. 223 f. and XVIII (1928), pp. 224 f. The scanty evidence available seems to indicate that on April 1 he was proclaimed by the soldiers with the connivance of Leo, the eastern Emperor, but that his formal adoption by Senate, army and people did not take place until December 28. Sidonius (v. 388, *collega*) tells us that Leo gave his assent on the latter occasion. This was strictly necessary (see n. 5 on p. 7), and there

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAJORIANUS

### V

#### PANEGYRIC<sup>1</sup>

Picture to your minds, O Roman people, all your past triumphs; now a consul holds the imperial power, one whom the hauberk clothes no less than the purple, whose brow is wreathed with the diadem not through vain parade but through lawful power, and to whom as reward of his toils doth come the palm-decked robe<sup>2</sup> after the victor's palm. Now the fasces crown all the splendours of sovereignty, and the prince is magnified in the consul. Therefore jubilant Europe shouts a "bravo" for thee, echoing through sky and countryside and cities and waters, since thou who wert a conqueror art now greeted as ruler. I confess it, the world trembled with alarm while thou wert loth that thy victories should benefit thee, and with overmuch modesty wert grieved that thou didst deserve the throne, and so with a woful refusal wouldst not undertake to rule that which thou hadst deemed worth defending.<sup>3</sup>

Rome, the warrior-goddess, had taken her seat. Her breast was uncovered, on her plumed head was a crown of towers, and behind her, escaping from under her spacious helmet, her hair flowed over her

seems to be no cogent reason for doubting the poet's assertion. Stein rather arbitrarily takes the mention of Leo to refer to April 1, while implicitly admitting that the reference in the same sentence to "commons, Senate and army" applies only to December 28. The attitude of Leo does seem to have been wavering and baffling, and may well have made Majorian hesitate, but it is very doubtful if Majorian would have committed himself irrevocably on December 28 without at least a formal assent from the eastern Emperor.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

lactitiam censura manet terrorque pudore  
 crescit, et invita superat virtute venustas.  
 ostricolor pepli textus, quem fibula torto  
 mordax dente forat; tun quidquid mamma refundit  
 tegminis, hoc patulo concludit gemma recessu. 20—  
 hinc fulcit rutilus spatioso circite laevum  
 umbo latus; videas hic crasso fusa metallo  
 antra Rheae fetamque lupam, quam fauce relecta  
 blandiri quoque terror erat; quamquam illa vorare  
 Martigenas et picta timet; pars proxima Thybrim 25  
 exprimit; hic scabri fusus sub pumice tofi  
 proflabat madidum per guttura glauca soporem;  
 pectus palla tegit, quam neverat Ilia coniunx,  
 liquenti quae iuncta toro vult murmura lymphis  
 tollere et undosi somnum servare mariti. 30  
 ista micant clipeo; cuspis trabe surgit eburna,  
 ebria caede virum. propter Bellona tropacum  
 exstruit et quercum captivo pondere curvat.  
 consurgit solium saxis quae caesa rubenti  
 Aethiopum de monte cadunt, ubi sole propinquo 35  
 nativa exustas adflavit purpura rupes.  
 iungitur hic Synnas, Nomadum lapis additur istic,  
 antiquum mentitus ebur; post caute Laconum  
 marmoris herbosi radians interviret ordo.

19. forat Wilamowitz: vorat.

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<sup>1</sup> Compare the shorter description of Rome's shield, 2. 395 sq.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to *lapis Syenites*, a red granite quarried near Syene (Assuan), on the Egyptian side of the Ethiopian border. Syene was supposed to lie on the tropic; its heat was proverbial. See also *Epist.* II. 2. 7. For similar lists of stones see II. 17-19, 22. 136-141, *Epist.* II. *loc. cit.*

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

back. She has a sternness ready to rebuke exultation, her modest mien but makes her more terrible, and her valour is loth to see her beauty triumph. Purple-hued is her robe, which a clasp pierces with the bite of its twisted tooth; that part of her mantle which her breast throws off is gathered up by a jewel under her ample bosom. Here a glowing shield<sup>1</sup> of vast circumference supports her left side. Thereon can be seen, cast in thick metal, the cave of Rhea, and the mother-wolf, whose very caresses were fearsome with those open jaws—yet even in her pictured guise she is afraid to devour the sons of Mars. The near side figures Tiber, outstretched under a porous rock of scaly tuff and breathing forth his humid slumber through his grey-green throat. His breast is covered with a robe which his wife Ilia had spun, and she, close to that dripping couch, would fain stop the plashing and guard the sleep of her watery mate. Such are the pictures that sparkle on the shield. Her spear, set on an ivory shaft, towered up, drunk with the slaughter of men. Near by Bellona was building up a trophy and making an oak tree bend with the weight of captured spoils. The lofty throne was fashioned of the stones that are quarried and lowered from the ruddy Aethiopian mount, where the sun is nigh and thus a natural purple has tinged the seared crags.<sup>2</sup> Here Synnadian, there Numidian marble, that counterfeits old ivory,<sup>3</sup> was added; after these the grass-hued marble from Laconian scaur interposed a row of radiant green.

<sup>3</sup> Numidian marble ("giallo antico") "varies in colour from the faintest straw tint to deep shades of rich yellow." (M. W. Porter, *What Rome was built with*, p. 37.)

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Ergo ut se mediam solio dedit, advolat omnis 40  
 terra simul. tum quaeque suos provincia fructus  
 exposuit: fert Indus cbur, Chaldaeus amomum,  
 Assyrius gemmas, Ser vellera, tura Sabacus,  
 Atthis mel, Phoenix palmas, Lacedaemon olivum, 45 -  
 Arcas equos, Epirus equas, pecuaria Gallus,  
 arma Chalybs, frumenta Libys, Campanus Iacchum,  
 aurum Lydus, Arabs guttam, Panchaia myrrham,  
 Pontus castorea, blattam Tyrus, aera Corinthus;  
 Sardinia argentum, naves Hispania defert  
 fulminis et lapidem; scopulos iaculabile fulgur 50  
 fucat et accensam silicem fecunda maritat  
 ira deum; quotiens caelum se commovet illic,  
 plus ibi terra valet.

Subito flens Africa nigras  
 procubuit lacerata genas et cernua frontem  
 iam male fecundas in vertice fregit aristas 55  
 ac sic orsa loqui: "venio pars tertia mundi,  
 infelix felice uno. famula satus olim  
 hic praedo et dominis exstinctis barbara dudum  
 sceptrum tenet tellure mea penitusque fugata  
 nobilitate furens quod non est non amat hospes. 60  
 o Latii sopite vigor, tua moenia ridet  
 insidiis cecidisse suis: non concutis hastam?  
 non pro me vel capta doles? tua nempè putantur

56. loqui est *codd. plerique*.

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<sup>1</sup> This stone was probably a kind of cat's-eye. According to one popular belief it was found only in places which had been struck by lightning (Isid. *Etym.* XVI. 13. 5. Some said this only of a rare variety of thunder-stone; Plin. *N.H.* xxxvii. 135). The stone was called *ceraunius* (sc. *lapis*), *ceraunia* (sc. *gemma*), or *ceraunium*.

<sup>2</sup> Or possibly "becomes more precious."

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 2. 358 sq.

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

So when she had seated her on the throne in the midst, all lands flocked to her at once. The provinces display their several fruits; the Indian brings ivory, the Chaldaean nard, the Assyrian jewels, the Chinaman silk, the Sabaeen frankincense; Attica brings honey, Phoenicia palms, Sparta oil, Arcadia horses, Epirus mares, Gaul flocks and herds, the Chalybian arms, the Libyan corn, the Campanian wine, the Lydian gold, the Arab amber, Panchaia myrrh, Pontus castory, Tyre purple, and Corinth bronzes; Sardinia offers silver, Spain ships and the thunderstone<sup>1</sup>—for there the flashing levin-bolt stains the rocks, and the fertilising wrath of the gods impregnates the heated flint: whensoever in that clime the sky stirs itself to fury, the earth there waxes stronger.<sup>2</sup>

Of a sudden Africa flung herself down weeping, with her swarthy cheeks all torn. Bowing her forehead she broke the corn-ears that crowned her, ears whose fruitfulness was now her bane; and thus she began: "I come, a third part of the world, unfortunate because one man is fortunate. This man, son of a slave-woman,<sup>3</sup> hath long been a robber; he hath blotted out our rightful lords, and for many a day hath wielded his barbarian sceptre in my land, and having driven our nobility utterly away this stranger loves nothing that is not mad.<sup>4</sup> O slumbering energy of Latium! He makes scornful boast that thy walls yielded to his cunning.<sup>5</sup> Wilt thou not then brandish the spear? Dost thou not grieve for me, even though thou too hast been captured? In sooth it is

<sup>1</sup> There is a double meaning in *nobilitas* (nobles and nobleness): he has driven away all that is noble and loves only what is mad.

<sup>2</sup> The Vandals under Geiseric sacked Rome in June, A.D. 455. *Insidiis* may contain a reference to the suspected collusion of Geiseric with the Empress Eudoxia. See Bury I. 324.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

surgere fata malis et celsior esse ruina;  
 sed melius, quod terror abit: iam vincere restat, 65  
 si pugnas ut victa soles. Porsenna superbum  
 Tarquinium impingens complevit milite Tusco  
 Ianiculum quondam; sed dum perrumpere portas  
 obsidione parat totam te pertulit uno  
 Coclitis in clipeo; presserunt milia solum 70  
 multa virum pendente via; nec ponte soluto  
 cum caderet cecidit. rex idem denique morte  
 admonitus scribae didicit sibi bella moveri  
 non solum cum bella forent; mox pace petita  
 in regnum rediit, non tam feriente fugatus 75  
 quam flagrante viro. steterat nam corde gelato  
 Scaevola et apposito dextram damnaverat igni,  
 plus felix peccante manu, cum forte satelles  
 palleret constante reo tormentaue capti  
 is fugeret qui tortor erat. Brennum tremuisti, 80  
 post melior: quodcumque tuum est, quodcumque  
 vocaris,  
 iam solus Tarpeius erat; sed reppulit unus  
 tum quoque totam aciem, Senones dum garrulus  
 anser  
 nuntiat et vigilat vestrum sine milite fatum.  
 me quoque (da veniam quod bellum gessimus olim) 85  
 post Trebiam Cannasque domas, Romanaque tecta  
 Hannibal ante meus quam nostra Scipio vidit.

65. *quo codd. plerique.*

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. 7. 5, Hor. *Carm.* iv. 4. 57-68, etc.

<sup>2</sup> *corde gelato*, which should refer to fear (Luc. VII. 339), here means "perfectly cool." There is a characteristically absurd contrast between the coolness of Scaevola and the heat of the fire.



## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

believed that thy fortunes are exalted by ills and that a fall makes thee rise all the higher;<sup>1</sup> but now thy case is better, for the menace hath departed from thee; now victory awaits thee if thou but fight as thou art wont to fight after defeats. Once Porsenna, forcing Tarquin the Proud upon thee, filled Janiculum with Tuscan soldiery; but as he made ready by siege to break through thy gates, he met in the one shield of Cocles the whole of thee. Myriads bore hard upon that lone man while the passage across hung doubtful; and when the bridge was broken he fell, yet did not fall. The selfsame king at last took warning from his scribe's death and learned that he was being warred against not only when war was raging; thereupon he sought peace and returned to his kingdom, driven back less by a man's blow than by his burning. For Scaevola had stood with heart cool as ice<sup>2</sup> and doomed his right hand to the fire near by (happier he in that his hand struck in error), while the retainer grew pale as he saw the offender's courage, and the torturer fled from the prisoner's tortures. Thou didst quake before Brennus,<sup>3</sup> though later thou wast more than his match. It had come to such a pass that all the possessions and all the name thou now enjoyest were bound up in the Tarpeian mount<sup>4</sup> alone; but then also one man drove back a whole host, when the cackling goose announced the Senones and thy destiny kept watch without warriors. Me also (forgive me that I warred with thee aforetime) thou didst crush after the Trebia and Cannae, yet my Hannibal viewed Rome's roofs ere Scipio saw

<sup>3</sup> The Gaul who captured Rome (390 B.C.).

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.* the Capitol, which was not taken.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

quid merui? fatis cogor tibi bella movere,  
 cum volo, cum nolo. trepidus te territat hostis,  
 sed tutus claudente freto, velut hispidus alta 90  
 sus prope tesqua iacet claususque cacuminat albis  
 os nigrum telis gravidum; circumlatrat ingens  
 turba canum, si forte velit concurrere campo;  
 ille per obiectos vepres tumet atque superbit,  
 vi tenuis fortisque loco, dum proximus 'heia!' 95  
 venator de colle sonet: vox nota magistri  
 lassatam reparat rabiem; tum vulnera caccus  
 fastidit sentire furor. quid proelia differs?  
 quid mare formidas, pro cuius saepe triumphis  
 et caelum pugnare solet? quid quod tibi princeps 100  
 est nunc eximius, quem praescia saecula clamant  
 venturum excidio Libyae, qui tertius ex me  
 accipiet nomen? debent hoc fata labori,  
 Maioriane, tuo. quem cur conscendere classem  
 ac portus intrare meos urbemque subire, 105  
 si iubeas, cupiam, paucis ex ordine fabor.

"Fertur, Pannoniae qua Martia pollet Acincus,  
 Illyricum rexisse solum cum tractibus Histri  
 huius avus; nam Theodosius, quo tempore Sirmi  
 Augustum sumpsit nomen, per utramque magistrum

101. *sic codd. Bernensis et Paris. 2782*; nunc praetura (praeterea *M*) eximius quem saecula ceteri.

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<sup>1</sup> Probably a reference to the defeat of the Vandals off Corsica in A.D. 456 (n. on 2. 367).

<sup>2</sup> Rather an unfortunate expression, coming from the lips of Africa; but Sidonius, like his model Virgil (*Aen.* I. 22), is thinking of the conquest of Carthage. Carthage was Geiseric's capital.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* after the two Scipios. *Nomen* refers to the honorary surname *Africanus*.

## V. PANEGRIC ON MAIORIANUS

ours. What is my fault? I am compelled by some fate to stir up wars against thee, when I will it and when I will it not. It is a frightened foe that frights thee now,<sup>1</sup> but he is guarded by the enclosing sea, as a shaggy boar lies low on the edge of the wild and, thus shut in, sharpens the white weapons wherewith his black jaws are loaded: around him barks a great pack of hounds, hoping he may choose to give them battle in the open plain, but he amid his barrier of briers swells with insolence, poor in dash but strong in situation, till the huntsman coming near shouts from the hill 'Have at him'; then the master's well-known voice revives the jaded fury of the dogs to a blind frenzy that scorns to feel wounds. Why dost thou delay the fight? Why dost thou fear the sea, when even heaven is wont so oft to battle for thy victories? And hast thou not now a peerless prince, whom the prophetic ages proclaim as destined for Libya's destruction,<sup>2</sup> and who shall be the third<sup>3</sup> to get an added name from me? To thy toil, Majorian, fate owes this guerdon. And the reason why I desire, if thou shouldst so bid, that he embark with his fleet and sail into my harbours and enter my city—this I will briefly declare in due order.

" 'Tis recorded that, where stands in all its might the martial city of Acincus<sup>4</sup> in Pannonia, his grandfather ruled the land of Illyricum together with the Danube-regions: for Theodosius, when he took the name of Augustus at Sirmium,<sup>5</sup> before setting forth

<sup>1</sup> Acincus (more usually Aquincum, Aquinquum or Acincum), a town in Pannonia Inferior on the right bank of the Danube; mod. Alt-Ofen or O'-Buda.

<sup>2</sup> Sirmium, modern Mitrovitz, capital of Pannonia Inferior.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

militiam ad partes regni venturus Roas 111  
 Maiorianum habuit. Latiis sunt condita fastis  
 facta ducis quotiens Scythicis inlata colonis  
 classica presserunt Hypanim, Peucenque rigentem  
 mente salutatis inrisit lixa pruinis. 115  
 hunc socerum pater huius habet, vir clarus et uno  
 culmine militiae semper contentus, ut unum  
 casibus in dubiis iunctus sequeretur amicum.  
 non semel oblatis temptavit fascibus illum  
 Actio rapere aula suo, sed perstitit ille, 120  
 maior honoratis: coepit pretiosior esse  
 sic pretio non capta fides. erat ille quod olim  
 quaestor consulibus: tractabat publica iure  
 aera suo: tantumque modum servabat ut illum  
 narraret rumor iam rebus parcere nati. 125  
 " Senserat hoc sed forte ducis iam livida coniunx  
 augeri famam pueri, suffusaque bili  
 coxerat internum per barbara corda venenum.  
 ilicet explorat caelum totamque volutis  
 percurrit mathesim numeris, interrogat umbras, 130  
 fulmina rimatur, fibras videt, undique gaudens  
 secretum rapuisse deo. sic torva Pelasgum  
 Colchis in aplustri steterat trepidante marito

115. *vid. Class. Quart. loc. cit. p. 17.*

<sup>1</sup> His name was Dominus.

<sup>2</sup> He must have controlled the war-chest of Aëtius. His office is compared with that of the *quaestor consulis* in republican Rome. This official accompanied his chief to war and afterwards to his province; his duties were mainly financial. Hodgkin, II. 404, wrongly says that Dominus was quaestor. Apart from other considerations, the words of Sidonius himself imply that the official designation of Dominus, whatever it may have been, was certainly not *quaestor*.

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

to the eastern parts of the realm, had a Majorian as his Master of Both Services. The exploits of this leader have been inscribed in Rome's public annals whensoever his troops were launched against the Scythian landsmen and marched over the Hypanis, and even the camp-followers mocked at frozen Peuce, bidding welcome to the frosts. This leader's daughter was married to our prince's father,<sup>1</sup> a renowned man who was content to the end with a single high office in the imperial service, that he might follow one single friend and cling to him in times of jeopardy. Not once but oft the court strove with offers of the consulship to steal him from his Aëtius, but he stood firm, a greater man than those who received these dignities; and a loyalty which no price could tempt came to be held more precious. He was what of old the quaestor was to the consuls;<sup>2</sup> he controlled the public funds by right of his office; and such moderation did he maintain that rumour declared he was thus early saving the future possessions of his son.

"But as it chanced, the wife of the leader,<sup>3</sup> already jealous, had perceived that the youth's renown was thus waxing greater, and, filled with spleen, she had nursed the hidden venom in her barbarian heart. So now she searches the sky, casting up numbers and exhausting the astrologer's lore; she questions ghosts, explores the thunderbolts, and gazes at entrails, rejoicing to wrest God's secret purpose from every source. Even thus grimly had stood the Colchian woman<sup>4</sup> on the stern

<sup>3</sup> The young Majorian got his first taste of military service under Aëtius. The explanation here given of his sudden dismissal may be merely a piece of popular gossip.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. 2. 493.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Absyrtum sparsura patri facturaque caesi  
 germani plus morte nefas, dum funere pugnat 135  
 et fratrem sibi tela facit; vel cum obruit ignem  
 taurorum plus ipsa calens textitque trementem  
 frigida flamma virum, quem defendente veneno  
 inter flagrantes perhibent alsisse iuvenco.

“ Ergo animi dudum impatiens, postquam audiit isti  
 imperium et longum statui, laniata lacertos 141  
 ingreditur, qua strata viri, vocemque furem  
 his rupit: ‘ secure iaces, oblite tuorum,  
 o piger: et mundo princeps (sic saccula poscunt)  
 Maiorianus erit; clamant hoc sidera signis, 145  
 hoc homines votis. isti quid sidera quaero,  
 fatum aliud cui fecit amor? nil fortius illo,  
 et puer est cupidus numquam, sed parcus habendi;  
 pauper adhuc iam spargit opes, ingentia suadet  
 consilia et sequitur, totum quod cogitat altum est,  
 urget quod sperat. ludum si forte retexam, 151  
 consumit quidquid iaculis fecisse putaris  
 istius una dies: tribus hunc tremuere sagittis  
 anguis, cervus, aper. non sic libravit in hostem  
 spicula qui nato serpentis corpore cincto 155  
 plus timuit cum succurrit, dum iactibus isdem  
 interitum vitamque daret stabilemque teneret  
 corde tremente manum, totamque exiret in artem

152. consumpsit *LM*.

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<sup>1</sup> Alcon. Cf. 183. The son whom he saved was Phalerus, one of the Argonauts.

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

of the Grecian ship in the presence of her terrified husband, ready to throw Absyrtus in pieces at his father and commit a horror worse than her brother's murder, as she used a corpse for battle and made missiles of her own kin: so too when, herself burning with a fiercer warmth, she quenched the fire of the bulls, and chilled was the flame that enwrapped her trembling lover, who, they say, through the protection of a magic drug, felt cold amid the blazing cattle.

"So after long chafing, when she heard that the sovereignty was ordained even from of old for that youth, she tore her arms and entered thus where her lord's couch stood, and broke forth into these frenzied cries: 'Heedless thou liest there, sluggard, oblivious of thine own, and Majorian (for so the ages claim) is to be the world's chief; the stars proclaim this by signs and mankind by their prayers. Why do I search for stars baneful to him for whom love has created another destiny? No power is stronger than love. And the youth is never covetous, but is moderate in his getting; though his wealth as yet is slender, he is already lavish with his means. Great plans he urges and follows. All his thoughts aspire high, and he pushes forward whatever his hopes conceive. Were I to recount his sport—one single day of his wipes out all that thou art reputed to have performed as bowman: three arrows laid trembling before him a snake, a stag and a boar. Not so surely was the shaft launched against the foe by him<sup>1</sup> who, when his son was encircled by a serpent's body, felt a new dread in the act of succouring, as he dispensed both life and destruction with the same shot, keeping a steady hand with a quaking heart, and as hope drew closer his fear found relief

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spe propiore metus, dans inter membra duorum  
 unius mortem. libeat decernere caestu: 160  
 cessit Eryx Siculus, simili nec floruit arte  
 Sparta, Therapnaca pugilem cum gymnade pinguem  
 stratus Bebryciis Amycus suspexit larenis.  
 qui vigor in pedibus! frustra sibi natus Ophelte  
 Sicaniam tribuit palmam, plantasque superbas 165  
 haud ita per siccam Nemeen citus extulit Arcas,  
 cuius in Aetolo volitantem pulvere matrem  
 horruit Hippomenes, multo qui caespite circi  
 contemptu praemissus erat, cum carceris antro  
 emicuit pernix populo trepidante virago, 170  
 nil toto tactura gradu, cum pallidus ille  
 respiceret medium post se decrescere campum  
 et longas ad signa vias flatuque propinquo  
 pressus in hostili iam curreret anxius umbra,  
 donec ad anfractum metae iam iamque relictus 175  
 concita ter sparso fregit vestigia pomo.  
 qui videt hunc equitem Ledaëum spernit alumnum  
 ac iuvenem, Sthenoboea, tuum, cui terga vetustas  
 pennati largitur equi Lyciamque Chimaeram  
 quem superasse refert, vulnus cum sustulit unum 180  
 tres animas. vitam tum si tibi fata dedissent,  
 Maioriane ferox, vetuisses Castora frenos,  
 Pollucem caestus, Alconem spicula nosse,

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<sup>1</sup> Son of Aphrodite and Butes and founder of the town and temple of Eryx, in Sicily, according to some accounts; but the legends about him vary a great deal. His prowess as a boxer is referred to by Virgil, *Aen.* V. 391 f., 401 ff.; *vv.* 410-414 mention the boxing contest in which Hercules defeated and killed him. According to another version, it was a wrestling-bout.

<sup>2</sup> Amycus, the boxing king of the Bebryces, vanquished by Pollux in the course of the Argonautic expedition.

<sup>3</sup> Euryalus, son of Opheltes (*Verg. Aen.* IX. 201), the victor in the foot-race at the games celebrated in Sicily by Aeneas (*Aen.* V. 315-361).



## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

in the full exercise of his skill, dealing death to one amid the entangled bodies of two. Or suppose he chooses to try the issue in boxing—Sicilian Eryx<sup>1</sup> has now yielded up his glory, nor did Sparta bloom with such prowess when on the sand of Bebrycia the prostrate Amycus<sup>2</sup> looked up at the boxer greasy with the oil of the Laconian gymnasium. And what power of foot is his! In vain does the son of Opheltes<sup>3</sup> claim the palm won in Sicily: nor did the swift Arcadian<sup>4</sup> so lift his proud feet as he sped over thirsty Nemea, he whose mother, as she flitted over the Aetolian dust, dismayed Hippomenes, contemptuously sent far ahead along the course, when that fleet man-like maid dashed forth from the mouth of the starting-pen before the breathless throng, never to plant her whole foot anywhere, while he with blanched cheeks looked back and saw the intervening space behind him grow ever less, and scanned the long distance to the goal; and now he felt her breath close upon him and he was running, sore distressed, upon his adversary's shadow, till at the turning-point he bade fair to be left behind; then he arrested those flying steps by thrice throwing her an apple. Whoso sees him on horseback scorns the child of Leda<sup>5</sup> and Sthenoboea's loved one,<sup>6</sup> whom ancient story dowers with a wingéd mount, telling also that he overcame the Lycian Chimaera, destroying three lives with one stroke. Had fate granted it to thee to live then, gallant Majorian, thou wouldst have taken from Castor, Pollux, and Alcon their title to mastery of

<sup>1</sup> Parthenopæus, son of Atalanta; he was one of the "Seven against Thebes" and won the foot-race at the first celebration of the Nemean games. According to another version, he was the winner of the archery-contest.

<sup>5</sup> i.e. Castor; cf. 182.

<sup>6</sup> i.e. Bellerophon; cf. 184.

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Bellerophonteis insultaturus opimis.  
 si clipeum capiat, vincit Telamone creatum, 185  
 qui puppes inter Graias contra Hectoris ignem  
 ipsam etiam infidi classem defendit Vlixis.  
 missile si quanto iaculetur pondere quacris,  
 segnius insertae trepidans pro fasce Camillae  
 excussit telum Metabus, nec turbine tanto 190  
 stridula Pelidae per Troilon exiit ornus;  
 nec sic heroum tardantem busta Creontem  
 Atticus Aegides rupit Marathonide quercu;  
 nec sic intortum violatae Phoebados ultrix  
 in Danaos fulmen iecit, cum Graecia Troiae 195  
 noctem habuit similemque facem fixusque Capherei  
 cautibus inter aquas flammam ructabat Oileus.  
 "Parva loquor. quid quod, quotiens tibi bella  
 geruntur,  
 discipulus, non miles adest? et fugit alumnum:  
 aemulus econtra spectat. quod viceris odit 200  
 et quos vincis amat. totus dormitat ad istum  
 magnus Alexander, patris quem gloria torsit.  
 quid faciam infelix? nato quae regna parabo  
 exclusa sceptris Geticis, respública si me  
 praeterit et parvus super hoc Gaudentius huius 205  
 calcatur fati? istum iam Gallia laudat  
 quodque per Europam est. rigidis hunc abluit undis

<sup>1</sup> Ajax, son of Telamon: see Ovid, *Met.* XIII. 5 ff.

<sup>2</sup> The tale of Metabus is told in Verg. *Aen.* XI. 539-566.

<sup>3</sup> Theseus slew Creon, who had refused burial to Polynices and the other assailants of Thebes. See Statius, *Theb.* XII. 768 ff.

<sup>4</sup> The "lesser Ajax," son of Oileus, had assaulted Cassandra in the temple of Pallas Athena. The vengeance of the goddess is here, as often (*e.g.* Verg. *Aen.* I. 39-45), associated with the destruction of the returning Greek ships on Cape Caphereus. Pallas wrecks the ships, hurling many thunderbolts, one of which strikes Ajax and flings him upon a pointed rock. *Facem* refers to the lightning.

## V. PANEGRIC ON MAIORIANUS

the bridle, the boxing-glove and the arrow, and thou wouldst have made a mockery of Bellerophon's proud spoils. Should he take up his shield, he surpasses the offspring of Telamon,<sup>1</sup> who among the Greek ships defended against Hector's fires even the fleet of the treacherous Ulysses. If you ask with what force he hurls the javelin—more feebly did Metabus<sup>2</sup> fling his dart when alarmed for the bundle that held Camilla; with a less powerful swing did the ashen shaft of Peleus's son pass whirling through the body of Troilus; not with such strength did the man of Athens, son of Aegeus, crush with Marathonian oak Creon, who was hindering the burial of the heroes<sup>3</sup>; nor was the thunderbolt sent hurtling so violently against the Greeks by the maiden avenger of Phoebus' wronged votary, when Greece suffered a night such as Troy's with like flaring of brands, and the son of Oileus,<sup>4</sup> pinned on the cliffs of Caphereus, vomited flame amid the waters.

“ ‘ But these are trifles I speak of. There is more: whenever thou wagest war, he is near thee as a learner, not as a soldier, and while he professes himself thy pupil he looks on thee with a rival's eye. He hates the thought that thou hast conquered, and them that thou conquerest he loves. Compared with him, Alexander the Great, to whom his father's glory was torture,<sup>5</sup> is an arrant sluggard. Unhappy me! What shall I do? What realm shall I win for my son, debarred as I am from a Gothic sceptre,<sup>6</sup> if Rome ignores me and, to crown all, our little Gaudentius is trodden underfoot by this youth's destiny? Already Gaul and all Europe sound his praises. He

<sup>1</sup> See Plutarch, *Alex.* c. 5.

<sup>2</sup> The wife of Aëtius was, or claimed to be, of royal Gothic descent. Her father, Carpilio, was *comes domesticorum* under

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Rhenus, Arar, Rhodanus, Mosa, Matrona. Sequana  
 Ledus,  
 Clitis, Elaris, Atax, Vacalis; Ligerinque bipenni  
 excisum per frusta bibit. cum bella timentes 210  
 defendit Turonos, aberas; post tempore parvo  
 pugnastis pariter, Francus qua Cloio patentem  
 Atrebatum terras pervaserat. hic cocentes  
 claudebant angusta vias arcuque subactum  
 vicum Helenam flumenque simul sub tramite longo  
 artus suppositis trabibus transmiserat agger. 216  
 illic te posito pugnabat ponte sub ipso  
 Maiorianus eques. fors ripae colle propinquo

214. *fortasse* arcusque sub ictu. *Vid. Class. Quart. loc. cit.*  
*p. 18.*

Honorius, and her elder son was named after him. The younger son, Gaudentius, was named after his paternal grandfather. He was born about 440 and in 455 was taken by Geiseric as a prisoner to Africa, where he apparently died not later than 462. The present passage seems to imply that Carpilio, the elder brother of Gaudentius, was dead. He had been a member of an embassy to Attila on behalf of Aëtius (Cassiod. *Var. I. 4. 11*), perhaps in A.D. 434. It may have been on this occasion that he was detained by the Huns as a hostage. He seems to have regained his liberty, possibly by flight (Priscus, *fr. 8, F. H. G. IV. 81*). Nothing further is known about him.

<sup>1</sup> Ledus, the Laz, near Montpellier. *Clitis* unknown. *Elaris* = *Elaver*, the Allier, a tributary of the Loire. *Atax*, the Aude. *Vacalis* (*Vachalis*, *Vacalus*, *Vuhalis*), the Waal.

<sup>2</sup> Tours may have been threatened by an invasion of the Aremoricians. It is usual to connect these words with 7. 246, where the subjugation of the Aremoricians by Litorius (apparently in A.D. 437) is mentioned. But there was another

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAJORIANUS

bathes in the icy waters of Rhine, Arar, Rhone, Mosa, Matrona, Sequana, Ledus, Clitis, Elaris, Atax, Vacalis<sup>1</sup>; the Liger he cleaves with an axe and drinks piece by piece. When he defended the Turoni,<sup>2</sup> who feared the conflict, thou wast not there; but a little later ye fought together where Cloio<sup>3</sup> the Frank had overrun the helpless lands of the Atrebates. There was a narrow passage at the junction of two ways, and a road crossed both the village of Helena, which was within bow-shot, and the river, where that long but narrow path was supported by girders. Thou wert posted at the cross-roads, while Majorian warred as a mounted man close to the bridge itself.<sup>4</sup> As chance

Aremoricans rising about 446, and Tours may then also have been threatened. On the other hand, Sidonius may be referring to an occurrence not elsewhere recorded.

<sup>3</sup> Other forms are C(h)lodio, Chlogio. The incident here related (for which Sidonius is the only authority) is usually dated A.D. 428 ("about the year 431," C. M. H.). This dating is quite incompatible with the mention in v. 205 of Gaudentius (born about 440), taken in conjunction with the repeated insistence on the extreme youth of Majorian (who was, indeed, still *iuuenis* at the time of his accession: see v. 524); needless to say, it is also incompatible with the usual explanation of the reference to Tours (see the last note). The date was in all probability after 440 and may have been several years later. Stein (p. 493, n. 2) gives 451 as the *terminus ante quem*.

<sup>4</sup> The above rendering is given with some diffidence, but seems preferable to any other that has been offered. The meaning is that a narrow road ran from the cross-roads through the village and was continued over the bridge which spanned the river. The two strategic points were the cross-roads and the bridge; there Aëtius and Majorian were respectively posted. The *agger* and the *trames* are the same thing. *Artus* is here translated as if it agreed with *tramite*, in order to bring out the antithesis of the juxtaposed adjectives *longo* and *artus*—a feeble "point" for the sake of which Sidonius

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barbaricus resonabat hymen Scythicisque choreis  
 nubebat flavo similis nova nupta marito. 220  
 hos ergo, ut perhibent, stravit; crepitabat ad ictus  
 cassis et oppositis hastarum verbera thorax  
 arcebat squamis, donec conversa fugatus  
 hostis terga dedit; plaustri rutilare videres  
 barbarici vaga festa tori coniectaque passim 225  
 fercula captivasque dapes cirroque madente  
 ferre coronatos redolentia serta lebetas.  
 ilicet increscit Mavors thalamique refringit  
 plus ardens Bellona faces; rapit esseda victor  
 nubentemque nurum. non sic Pholoetica monstra  
 atque Pelethronios Lapithas Semeleius Euan 231  
 miscuit, Haemonias dum flammant orgia matres  
 et Venerem Martemque cient ac prima cruentos  
 consumunt ad bella cibos Bacchoque rotato  
 pocula tela putant, cum crudescente tumultu 235  
 polluit Emathium sanguis Centauricus Othryn.  
 nec plus nubigenum celebrentur iurgia fratrum:  
 hic quoque monstra domat, rutili quibus arce cerebri  
 ad frontem coma tracta iacet nudataque cervix  
 saetarum per damna nitet, tum lumine glauco 240  
 albet aquosa acies ac vultibus undique rasis  
 pro barba tenues perarantur pectine cristae.

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has dislocated and complicated the sentence. For a fuller discussion see *Class. Quart. loc. cit.* pp. 17 ff. *Pugnabat* in v. 217 means merely "was serving," or "was under arms"; the fighting began later. Helena has not been identified with certainty; most historians now seem to favour Hélesmes (Dép. Nord); other possibilities are Vieil-Hesdin and Lens.

<sup>1</sup> *Scyth.*, i.e. Frankish. Contrast 2. 239, 7. 246, 280, 304, where "Scythian" refers to the Huns; 5. 329 (Vandals: see n. on 2. 351); 7. 403, 498 (Goths).

<sup>2</sup> The Centaurs were sons or descendants of Ixion and a cloud.

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

would have it, the echoing sound of a barbarian marriage-song rang forth from a hill near the river-bank, for amid Scythian<sup>1</sup> dance and chorus a yellow-haired bridegroom was wedding a young bride of like colour. Well, these revellers, they say, he laid low. Time after time his helmet rang with blows, and his hauberk with its protecting scales kept off the thrust of spears, until the enemy was forced to turn and flee. Then might be seen the jumbled adornments of the barbarian nuptials gleaming red in the waggons, and captured salvers and viands flung together pell-mell, and servants crowned with perfumed garlands carrying wine-bowls on their oily top-knots. Straightway the spirit of Mars waxes fiercer and the nuptial torches are snapped asunder by the more fiery goddess of war; the victor snatches their chariots and carries off the bride in the hour of her bridal. Not so fiercely did Bacchus, Semele's son, embroil Pholoe's monsters and the Thracian Lapithae, when his revels inflamed the Thracian women, stirring up both love and war, and they used for the struggle first of all the bloody meats of the feast, and whirling the wine about deemed their cups weapons; while, as the affray grew fiercer, the blood of Centaurs defiled Emathian Othrys. And truly the quarrel of the cloud-born brothers<sup>2</sup> deserves no more renown; for this youth likewise subdues monsters, on the crown of whose red pates lies the hair that has been drawn towards the front, while the neck, exposed by the loss of its covering, shows bright. Their eyes are faint and pale, with a glimmer of greyish blue. Their faces are shaven all round, and instead of beards they have thin moustaches which they run through with

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strictius assutae vestes procera coercent  
 membra virum, patet his altato tegmine poples,  
 latus et angustam suspendit balteus alvum. 245  
 excussisse citas vastum per inane bipennes  
 et plagae praescisse locum clipeosque rotare  
 ludus et intortas praecedere saltibus hastas  
 inque hostem venisse prius; puerilibus annis  
 est belli maturus amor. si forte premantur 250  
 seu numero seu sorte loci, mors obruit illos,  
 non timor; invicti perstant animoque supersunt  
 iam prope post animam. tales te teste fugavit  
 et laudante viros. quisnam ferat? omnia tecum,  
 te sine multa facit. pugnant pro principe cuncti:  
 quam timeo, ne iam iste sibi! si regna tenebit, 256  
 huic vincis, quodcumque domas. nil fata relinquunt  
 hic medium: percussor enim si respuis esse,  
 servus eris. certe recto si tramite servat  
 sidera Chaldaeus, novit si gramina Colchus, 260  
 fulgura si Tuscus, si Thessalus elicit umbras,  
 si Lyciae sortes sapiunt, si nostra volatu  
 fata locuntur aves, doctis balatibus Hammon  
 si sanctum sub Syrte gemit, si denique verum,  
 Phoebe, Themis, Dodona, canis, post tempora nostra  
 Iulius hic Augustus erit. coniunctus amore 266  
 praeterea est iuveni, grandis quem spiritus armat  
 regis avi. quo te vertas? ad culmina mundi

<sup>1</sup> The oracle of Apollo at Patara: Verg. *Aen.* IV. 346.

<sup>2</sup> The god Ammon (or Hammon) was represented as a ram, or in human form with the head (sometimes with only the horns) of a ram.

<sup>3</sup> Reference to Ricimer. The "royal grandfather" is Wallia; see n. on 2. 362-5.



## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

a comb. Close-fitting garments confine the tall limbs of the men; they are drawn up high so as to expose the knees, and a broad belt supports their narrow middle. It is their sport to send axes hurtling through the vast void and know beforehand where the blow will fall, to whirl their shields, to outstrip with leaps and bounds the spears they have hurled and reach the enemy first. Even in boyhood's years the love of fighting is full-grown. Should they chance to be sore pressed by numbers or by the luck of the ground, death may overwhelm them, but not fear; unconquerable they stand their ground, and their courage well-nigh outlives their lives. Such men did he put to flight with thee to witness and to praise. Who could endure it? All thine exploits he shares, many more he performs without thee. All men fight for their emperor; I fear, alas! he now fights for himself. If he should win the sovereignty, then all the conquests thou makest are victories for him. Here the fates leave no middle course; if thou refuse to be his assassin, thou wilt be his slave. Certain is this: if the Chaldaean goes not astray in his star-gazing, if the Colchian has knowledge of herbs, the Tuscan of lightning, if the Thessalian tempts forth the ghosts of the dead, if the Lycian oracle<sup>1</sup> hath discernment, if the birds can tell our destiny by their flight, if Hammon nigh to the Syrtes wails forth a hallowed rede with prescient bleatings,<sup>2</sup> yes, if Phoebus, Themis, Dodona chant forth the truth, then when our day is over this man shall be Julius Augustus. Moreover, there is linked with him in bonds of affection one who is armed with the great spirit of a royal grandfather.<sup>3</sup> Whither canst thou

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hic fatum fert, anbo animum. consurge simulque  
 aggredere ignaros. neutrum mactare valebis, 270  
 si iubeas utrumque mori; sed necte dolosas  
 blanditias uni, ferro tamen iste petatur.  
 quid loquor incassum? nihil est quod tanta cavemus:  
 ut regnet victurus erit!'

" Commotus in iras

Actius sic pauca refert: 'compesce furentis 275  
 impia vota animi. mortem mandare valebo  
 insontis, taceam nostri? quisquamne precatur  
 ut sine criminibus crimen fiat bene nasci?  
 ad poenam quis fata vocet? tua viscera ferro,  
 Maioriane, petam, Phoebus si nocte refulget, 280  
 Luna die, duplex ponto si plaustra novatur  
 Parrhasis, Atlantem Tanais, si Bagraa cernit  
 Caucason, Hercynii nemoris si stipite linitis  
 texta Nabataeum pro Rheno sulcat Hydaspem,  
 si bibit Hispanus Gangem tepidisque ab Erythris 285  
 ad Tartesiaceum venit Indus aquator Hiberum,  
 si se Pollucis perfundit sanguine Castor,  
 Thesea Pirithoi, Pyladen si stravit Orestae  
 vel furibunda manus, raperet cum Taurica sacra  
 matricida pius. sed ne sprevisse dolorem 290  
 forte tuum videar, vivat careatque parumper  
 militia. heu! potuit nobis, nisi triste putasses,  
 fortunam debere suam.'

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<sup>1</sup> The Bears.

<sup>2</sup> *Eryth.*: n. on 2. 447.

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

turn? To the world's topmost pinnacle he directs his fate and both direct their thoughts. Arise and assail them at the same time unawares. Neither of them wilt thou be able to slay if thou shouldst order that both die; nay, rather weave crafty flatteries for the one, and let this man be attacked with the sword. But why do I speak vain words? 'Tis for naught that we seek to avert these fateful events. He will surely live that he may reign.'

"Aëtius, stirred to wrath, thus briefly answered: 'Curb the impious longings of thy frenzied spirit! Can I order the death of a man who is innocent, not to say our friend? Can anyone urge that where no crime is charged it be made a crime to be well-born? Who can summon the fates to judgment? I will assail thy body with the sword, Majorian,—yes, if the sun shines by night and the moon by day, if the two Arcadian constellations<sup>1</sup> have their wains refreshed in the sea, if Tanais looks on Atlas and Bagrađa on the Caucasus, if the boat compacted of timbers from the Hercynian forest cleaves the eastern Hydaspes instead of the Rhine, if the Spaniard drinks of the Ganges and the Indian comes from warm Erythrae<sup>2</sup> to the Spanish Ebro to draw water, if Castor steps himself in his brother's blood, if the hand of Pirithous laid Theseus low, or the hand of Orestes, frenzied as it was, struck Pylades down when the filial matricide was snatching the holy image from the Tauric shrine. Nevertheless, I would fain not be deemed to have slighted thy distress; so he shall live, indeed, but he shall be taken from his soldiering for a brief space. Alas! But for thy gloomy thoughts he might have owed his rise to me!'

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

" Sic fatur et illum  
 rure iubet patrio suetos mutare labores,  
 fatorum currente rota, quo disceret, agri 295  
 quid possessorem maneat, quos denique mores  
 ius civile paret, ne solam militis artem  
 ferret ad imperium. suspenderat illicet arma  
 emeritus iuvenis, sterilis ieiunia terrae  
 vomere fecundans. sic quondam consule curvo  
 vertebas campos, paulum si pace sequestra 301  
 classica laxasses, fortis cui laeva regebat  
 stivam post aquilas, humili dum iuncta camino  
 victoris fumum biberet palmata bubulci.  
 " Principis interea gladio lacrimabile fatum 305  
 clauserat Aëtius; cuius quo tutius ille  
 magna Palatinis coniungeret agmina turmis,  
 evocat hunc precibus. sed non se poena moratur  
 sanguinis effusi (numerum collegerat ergo,

295. agri *Luetjohann* : agro.

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<sup>1</sup> Aëtius was slain by Valentinian III and the eunuch chamberlain Heraclius on Sept. 21, A.D. 454. Petronius Maximus, who had instigated this murder in the vain hope of succeeding Aëtius as "the Patrician," soon turned upon his imperial master and caused him to be assassinated on March 16, A.D. 455. On the following day he was proclaimed Emperor. A month and a half later he was killed as he sought flight before the Vandals' advance on Rome. When Geiseric departed after plundering the capital, Avitus was proclaimed Emperor in Gaul, and he entered Rome before the end of the year, accompanied by our poet, his son-in-law. Scarcely a year later he was deposed by Ricimer and Majorian, and died shortly afterwards. After an interregnum he was succeeded, in the year 457, by Majorian, who would perhaps have been elevated two years before had not Petronius Maximus stood in his way. It must have been very hard for Sidonius to write this part of the poem. Avitus, of course, is not mentioned.

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAJORIANUS

“ So spake he, and ordered the fighter to exchange his wonted toil for his native fields; but fate’s revolving wheel was here at work, to the end that he might learn what is in store for the possessor of land and likewise what conduct the civil law creates, and so he might bring to the throne more than a soldier’s skill. Straightway he had hung up his armour, this veteran young in years, and was making the leanness of a barren land fruitful with the plough. Even so in old times thou wert wont, O Rome, to upturn thy fields by the work of a stooping consul, when peace had intervened for a little and thou hadst relaxed thy campaigning; and his stout left hand would control the plough after he had ruled the legions, while near the lowly hearth a peasant-conqueror’s palm-decked robe drank in the smoke.

“ Meanwhile Aëtius<sup>1</sup> had fulfilled his melancholy fate by the sword of the emperor; who, that he might with more safety win over the great hosts of his victim to join the Palatine bands, called on Majorian with prayers to come to him.<sup>2</sup> But punishment for the blood that he had shed was not long in coming (so ’twas a mere mob he had rallied round

<sup>2</sup> After the death of Aëtius, Valentinian summoned Majorian from his retreat and made him *comes domesticorum*. The *palatini*, like the old Praetorian Guards, were stationed in various parts of Italy. They were under the command of the *magister utriusque militiae*. The *domestici*, another body of guards, usually but not always in attendance at the Court, were commanded independently by the *comes domesticorum*. *Magna agmina* refers particularly to the great body of armed retainers (*buccellarii*) which Aëtius had enlisted in his service, and which almost certainly outnumbered the regular troops available in Italy.

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non animum populi): ferri mala crimina ferro 310  
 solvit et in vestram plus concidit ille ruinam.  
 iam tunc imperium praesentis principis aurea  
 volvebant bona fata colu; sed publica damna  
 invidiam fugere viri. quicumque fuerunt  
 nomen in Augustum lecti, tenere relictum 315  
 Caesaribus solum: postquam tu capta laboras,  
 hic quod habet fecit. Traianum Nerva vocavit,  
 cum pignus iam victor erat: Germanicus esset  
 ut titulis, meritis fuerat. res ordine currit;  
 hanc ambit famam quisquis sic incipit. olim 320  
 post Capreas Tiberi, post turpia numina Gai,  
 censuram Claudii, citharam thalamosque Neronis,  
 post speculi immanis pompam, quo se ille videbat  
 hinc turpis, quod pulcher, Otho, post quina Vitelli  
 milia famosi ventris damnata barathro, 325  
 his titulis princeps lectus similique labore  
 Vespasianus erat.

“ Sed ne fortasse latronis

me clausam virtute putes, consumpsit in illo  
 vim gentis vitae vitium; Scythicam feritatem  
 non vires, sed vota tenent, spoliisque potitus 330  
 immensis robur luxu iam perdidit omne  
 quo valuit dum pauper erat. mea viscera pro se  
 in me nunc armat; laceror tot capta per annos

326. labori *CPTF*.

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<sup>1</sup> At this point it is perhaps necessary to remind the reader that Africa is addressing all these words to the goddess Roma.

<sup>2</sup> See Suet. *Claud.* 16 for the eccentric conduct of Claudius as censor.

<sup>3</sup> See Juvenal II. 99.

<sup>4</sup> This was not true of Geiseric, though it may have been true of many of his followers.

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

him, not the hearts of the people); the sword's crime he expiated by the sword, and so he fell, O Rome, bringing thee lower than he himself was brought. Yet even then the kindly fates with their golden distaff were evolving the reign of our present chief; but the calamities of the people shrank from bringing enmity on such a man. All who had been chosen to bear the name of Augustus had held a throne left for them by the Caesars; but he, when thou<sup>1</sup> wert captured and in sore trouble, created that which he now holds. Nerva called Trajan to power when his son was already a conqueror; in official title he was styled Germanicus, but his deeds had made him so already. The one thing leads to the other: whoever begins thus aims at the same glory. In olden days after Tiberius in Capri, after Gaius' base assumption of divinity, after the censorship of Claudius,<sup>2</sup> after Nero with his lyre and his lechery, after the parade of that horrible mirror<sup>3</sup> in which Otho, foul because he was fair, was wont to behold himself, after Vitellius' five millions of money condemned to the bottomless pit of his scandalous belly, Vespasian had been chosen emperor with the same titles won by the same toil as Trajan's and Majorian's.

"But lest haply thou think that I am securely hemmed in by the valour of the Robber, know that in him the vileness of his vices has sapped the vigour of his race.<sup>4</sup> His Scythian<sup>5</sup> savagery is governed not by his strength but by his desires; spoils immense he has won, but already by his profligacy he has lost all that made him strong when he was poor. Now he arms mine own flesh against me for his own ends, and after all these years of captivity I am being

<sup>5</sup> See nn. on 219 above and on 2. 351.

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ure suo, virtute mea, fecundaque poenis  
 quos patiar pario. propriis nil conficit armis: 335  
 Gaetulis, Nomadis, Garamantibus Autololisque,  
 Arzuge, Marmarida, Psyllo, Nasamone timetur  
 segnis, et ingenti ferrum iam nescit ab auro.  
 ipsi autem color exsanguis, quem crapula vexat  
 et pallens pinguedo tenet, ganeaue perenni 340  
 pressus accescentem stomachus non explicat auram.  
 par est vita suis; non sic Barcaeus opinam  
 Hannibal ad Capuam periit, cum fortia bello  
 inter delicias mollirent corpora Baiae  
 et, se Luerinas qua vergit Gaurus in undas, 345  
 brachia Massylus iactaret nigra natator.  
 atque ideo hunc dominum saltem post saecula tanta  
 ultorem mihi redde, precor, ne dimicet ultra  
 Carthago Italiam contra."

Sic fata dolore

ingemuit lacrimisque preces adiuvit obortis. 350  
 his haec Roma refert: "longas succinge querellas,  
 o devota mihi: vindex tibi nomine divum  
 Maorianus crit. sed paucis pauca retexam.  
 ex quo Theodosius communia iura fugato  
 reddidit auctoris fratri, cui guttura fregit 355

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<sup>1</sup> This is related by Livy, XXIII. 18. 11-16, and is a favourite topic with later writers.

<sup>2</sup> In this answer of the goddess Roma the poet takes the opportunity of indicating the hardships suffered by Gaul during the past 75 years, with the object of enlisting Majorian's sympathy and of excusing the recent rebellion



## V. PANEGRIC ON MAIORIANUS

cruelly torn under his authority by the prowess of mine own; fertile in afflictions I bring forth sons to bring me suffering. Naught doth he perform with his own arms; Gaetulians, Numidians, Garamantians, Autololi, Arzuges, Marmaridae, Psylli, Nasamones—it is these that make him feared, but he is sunk in indolence and, thanks to untold gold, no longer knows aught of steel. His cheeks are bloodless; a drunkard's heaviness afflicts him, pallid flabbiness possesses him, and his stomach, loaded with continual gluttony, cannot rid itself of the sour wind. His followers live like him: Hannibal of Barca's race was not so utterly undone in affluent Capua's land,<sup>1</sup> when Baiae enfeebled amid all its allurements bodies that were strong for war, and the Massylian took to swimming and flourished his swarthy arms about where Gaurus stoops down to the Lucrine waters. So do thou, I pray thee, give me but this one lord after these many ages to be my avenger, that so Carthage may cease to war against Italy."

So speaking, she groaned in her distress, and the starting tears gave support to her prayers. Rome answered<sup>2</sup>: "Curb thy long plaint, my faithful one; Majorian shall be thine avenger commissioned by heaven.<sup>3</sup> But a few things in few words I will recall. Ever since Theodosius restored a joint authority to his patron's exiled brother, whose neck was broken by a hand destined to be turned against

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Stevens (p. 46, n. 5) inadvertently accuses the poet of inconsistency here: "In v. 352 Rome tells Africa who her saviour is to be, but in v. 104 Africa is represented as already knowing his name." But in the earlier passage Africa says "Majorian is the deliverer I want," and here Rome says "Majorian you shall have"; there is no inconsistency.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

post in se vertenda manus, mea Gallia rerum  
 ignoratur adhuc dominis ignaraque servit.  
 ex illo multum periit, quia principe clauso,  
 quisquis erat, miseri diversis partibus orbis  
 vastari sollemne fuit. quae vita placeret, 360  
 cum rector moderandus erat? contempta tot annos  
 nobilitas iacuit: pretium respublica forti  
 rettulit invidiam. princeps haec omnia noster  
 corrigit atque tuum vires ex gentibus addens 364  
 ad bellum per bella venit; nam maximus isse est,  
 non pugnasse labor. terimus cur tempora verbis?  
 pervenit et vincit." tali sermone peractum  
 concilium, verbisque deae famulante metallo  
 aurea concordēs traxerunt fila sorores.

Hos me quos cecini Romae Libyaeque labores 370  
 vota hominum docuere loqui; iam tempus ad illa  
 ferre pedem quae fanda mihi vel Apolline muto:  
 pro Musis Mars vester erit. conscenderat Alpes  
 Raetorumque iugo per longa silentia ductus  
 Romano exierat populato trux Alamannus 375

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<sup>1</sup> Gratian, who had raised Theodosius to Imperial power (hence *auctor*), was assassinated by his soldiers when the pretender Magnus Clemens Maximus invaded Gaul (A.D. 383). Maximus invaded Italy in 387 in order to attack Valentinian II (half-brother of Gratian), who fled to the East. Maximus was beheaded in the following year, whereupon Theodosius not only restored Valentinian to his former sway but gave him in addition the share of the Empire which Gratian had held. The death of Valentinian (A.D. 392) seems to have been brought about by Arbogastes, though the story of the strangling is doubtful. Arbogastes killed himself after the battle of the Frigidus (Sept. 6, 394).

<sup>2</sup> *principe clauso*, referring to Honorius and Valentinian III in Ravenna. These emperors were helpless, or worse, without the control of stronger hands (Stilicho, Constantius, Placidia, Aëtius): hence *rector moderandus erat* (v. 361).

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

itself,<sup>1</sup> my land of Gaul hath even till now been ignored by the lords of the world, and hath languished in slavery unheeded. Since that time much hath been destroyed, for with the emperor, whoe'er he might be, closely confined,<sup>2</sup> it has been the constant lot of the distant parts of a wretched world to be laid waste. What manner of life could satisfy when the ruler required a controlling hand? For many a year the nobility have lain prostrate and despised, and enmity has been the state's reward for the valiant. Now our prince is amending all this,<sup>3</sup> and he advances to your wars by way of other wars, adding fresh forces from divers peoples<sup>4</sup>; for 'tis the going, not the fighting, that is hardest. But why do we waste time in words? He comes, he conquers." With such speech the assembly was ended, and the fateful sisters harmoniously spun golden threads, whose metal humbly obeyed the words of the goddess.

These afflictions of Rome and Africa that I have sung the yearnings of mankind did teach me to proclaim; now it is time to advance to deeds which must needs be told, even were Apollo dumb. Thy Mars shall take the Muses' place. The savage Alaman had scaled the Alps, and, led down by way of the Rhaetian ridge over its long silences, had emerged, plundering the Roman land; he had sent

<sup>3</sup> This is perhaps as much a prayer as a statement of fact.

<sup>4</sup> Allusion to the Emperor's design of securing the loyalty and co-operation of the various foreign peoples in Gaul and Spain as a preliminary to the expedition against Geiseric. He had made a beginning with the conquered Burgundians, and the submission of the Visigoths came in the following year. See also n. on *vv.* 470-549.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

perque Cani quondam dictos de nomine campos  
 in praedam centum noviens dimiserat hostes.  
 iamque magister eras: Burconem dirigis illo  
 exigua comitante manu, sed sufficit istud  
 cum pugnare iubes; certa est victoria nostris 380  
 te mandasse acies; peragit fortuna triumphum  
 non populo, sed amore tuo; nolo agmina campo  
 quo mittis paucos. felix te respicit iste  
 eventus belli; certatum est iure magistri,  
 Augusti fato. nuper ferus hostis aperto 385  
 errabat lentus pelago, postquam ordine vobis  
 ordo omnis regnum dederat, plebs, curia, miles,  
 et collega simul. Campanam flantibus Austris  
 ingrediens terram securum milite Mauro  
 agricolam aggreditur; pinguis per transtra sedebat  
 Vandalus opperiens praedam, quam iusserat illuc 391  
 captivo capiente trahi. sed vestra repente  
 inter utrumque hostem dederant sese agmina planis  
 quae pelagus collemque secant portumque reducto  
 efficiunt flexu fluvii. perterrita primum 395

385. ferus hostis *ego*. (*Class. Quart. loc. cit.* p. 19); cf. 7. 285:  
 post hostis *codd.*

386. postquam: simul *C.*

<sup>1</sup> Campi Canini, a north-Italian region, near Bilitio (Bellinzona), in the upper part of the Ticinus valley.

<sup>2</sup> Majorian became *magister militum* on Feb. 27, 457.

<sup>3</sup> I have discussed the following passage in *Class. Quart. XXVIII* (1934), pp. 18 sqq.

<sup>4</sup> See n. 5, p. 7 and n. on vv. 9-12 of this poem. It seems clear that the reference here is to the formal accession on December 28, 457. The fight with the Vandals must have taken place in the following year, probably not many months

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nine hundred foemen to scour for booty the plains named long ago after Canius.<sup>1</sup> By this time thou wert Master of the Forces<sup>2</sup>; and thou didst send thither Burco with a band of followers, small indeed, but that suffices when *thou* bidst them fight; 'tis certain victory for our troops when they go under thine orders; Fortune brings about a triumph not through their numbers but through their love for thee. I crave no armies in a field to which thou sendest but a few men! <sup>3</sup> The happy issue of that campaign is due to thee, for thou didst fight with the authority of a Master, but with the destiny of an Emperor. Lately, when the throne had been bestowed on thee in due order by all orders—commons, senate, army, and thy colleague too<sup>4</sup>—a savage foe was roaming at his ease over the unguarded sea. Under southerly breezes he invaded the Campanian soil and with his Moorish soldiery attacked the husbandmen when they dreamed not of danger; the fleshy Vandal sat on the thwarts waiting for the spoil, which he had bidden his captives<sup>5</sup> to capture and bring thither. But of a sudden thy bands had thrown themselves between the two enemy hosts into the plains which sunder the sea from the hills and fashion a harbour where the river makes a backward curve. First the multitude

before the Panegyric was delivered (see also *v.* 489 n.). The fight with the Alamanni related in the previous lines must have happened before December 28, 457, but not necessarily before April 1, as there is good ground for believing that Majorian remained technically a *Magister Militum* until his formal accession in December. The two latest editors have caused great confusion by punctuating after instead of before *nuper* in *v.* 385.

<sup>5</sup> The Moors (*v.* 389), who had been subjugated by Geiseric.

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montes turba petit, trabibus quae clausa relictis  
 praedae praeda fuit; tum concitus agmine toto  
 in pugnam pirata coit: pars lintre cavata  
 iam dociles exponit equos, pars ferrea texta  
 concolor induitur, teretes pars explicat arcus 400  
 spiculaque infusum ferro latura venenum,  
 quae feriant bis missa semel. iam textilis anguis  
 discurrit per utramque aciem, cui guttur adactis  
 turgescit zephyris; patulo mentitur hiatu  
 iratam pictura famem, pannoque furorem 405  
 aura facit quotiens crassatur vertile tergum  
 flatibus et nimium iam non capit alvus inane.  
 at tuba terrisono strepuit grave rauca fragore,  
 responsat clamor lituis, virtusque repente  
 ignavis vel parva furit. cadit undique ferrum, 410  
 hinc tamen in iugulos: hunc torta falarica iactu  
 proterit, ad mortem vix cessatura secundam;  
 hunc conti rotat ictus; equo ruit aclyde fossus  
 ille veruque alius; iacet hic simul alite telo,  
 absentem passus dextram; pars poplite secto 415  
 mortis ad invidiam vivit, partemque cerebri  
 hic galeae cum parte rapit, fortique lacerto

412. *proterit Lueljohann*: *pr(a)eterit*.

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<sup>1</sup> See n. on 2. 232. These standards in the form of dragons or serpents were made of cloth or of flexible skins, hollow inside, and with a silver mouth. When the wind blew in at the mouth they contorted themselves in a manner which suggested real serpents. The last line of the description is hard. I have followed an ingenious suggestion of Dr. Semple that *inane* means "air"; the use is much bolder than in an expression like *vastum per inane* (v. 246), but probably pleased Sidonius, as it enabled him to introduce one of his innumerable paradoxes ("cannot hold the emptiness"). Literally the words

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of plunderers flees in terror towards the mountains, and so, cut off from the ships they had left, they become the prey of their prey; then the pirates are aroused and mass their whole forces for the battle. Some land their well-trained steeds in hollow skiffs, some don the meshed mail of like hue to themselves, some get ready their shapely bows and the arrows made to carry poison on the iron point and to wound doubly with a single shot. Now the broidered dragon<sup>1</sup> speeds hither and thither in both armies, his throat swelling as the zephyrs dash against it; that pictured form with wide-open jaw counterfeits a wrathful hunger, and the breeze puts a frenzy into the cloth as often as the lithe back is thickened by the blasts and the air is now too abundant for the belly to hold. Now the trumpet's deep note sounds with terrific blast; a responsive shout greets the clarions, and even the puny spirit of cowards suddenly bursts into frenzy. From everywhere a shower of steel comes down, but from our side it comes down on the throats of the foe; a hurtling javelin lays one man in the dust, scarce to exhaust its force with a second victim; another man is sent spinning by the thrust of a pike; one gashed by a harpoon, another by a lance, falls headlong from his horse; yet another, flung down by a flying shaft, lies there, the prey of a hand beyond his ken; some of them, with the thigh-sinews severed, live on to envy death; again, a warrior sweeps off part of a foeman's brain and part of his helmet together, cleaving the hapless skull with two-edged

mean "and the belly no longer has room for the excessive air," *i.e.* more air than the dragon's belly can hold blows in at the mouth.

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disicit ancipiti miserabile sinciput ense.  
 ut primum versis dat tergum Vandalus armis,  
 succedit caedes pugnae: discrimine nullo 420  
 sternuntur passim campis, et fortia quaeque  
 fecit iners. trepidante fuga mare pallidus intrat  
 et naves pertransit eques, turpique natatu  
 de pelago ad cymbam rediit. sic tertia Pyrrhi  
 quondam pugna fuit: caesis cum milibus illum 425  
 Dentatus premeret, lacerac vix fragmina classis  
 traxit in Epirum qui Chaonas atque Molossos,  
 qui Thracum Macetumque manus per litora vestra  
 sparserat et cuius vires Oenotria pallens  
 ipsaque, quae petiit, trepidaverat uncta Tarentus. 430  
 hostibus expulsis campum, qui maximus exstat,  
 iam lustrare vacat; videas hic strage sub illa  
 utrorumque animos: nullus non pectore caesus,  
 quisquis vester erat; nullus non terga foratus,  
 illorum quisquis. clamant hoc vulnera primi 435  
 praedonum tum forte ducis, cui regis avari  
 narratur nupsisse soror, qui pulvere caeco  
 clausus et elisus pilis vestigia turpis  
 gestat adhuc probrosa fugae. sic agmina vestra  
 cum spoliis campum retinent et Marte fruuntur. 440

Interea duplici texit dum litore classem  
 inferno superoque mari, cadit omnis in aequor  
 silva tibi niniumque diu per utrumque recisus,  
 Appennine, latus, navali qui arbore dives  
 non minus in pelagus nemorum quam mittis aquarum.

444. navali qui *Mohr*: navalique.

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<sup>1</sup> The blackamoor turns pale again in v. 602.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. it is no longer a flat plain but a hill of corpses.

<sup>3</sup> The Adriatic and the Tuscan Sea.



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sword wielded by a strong arm. Soon as the Vandal began to turn and flee, carnage took the place of battle; all were laid low promiscuously throughout the plain, and even the coward did the most doughty deeds. In their panic flight the horsemen plunged pallid<sup>1</sup> into the water and passed beyond the ships, then swam back in disgrace to their boats from the open sea. Like to this in olden days was the third fight of Pyrrhus: when Dentatus had slain thousands and pressed him sore, he scarce dragged some fragments of his shattered fleet to Epirus—he who had spread over thy shores bands of Chaonians and Molossians, Thracians and Macedonians, he at whose might Oenotria grew pale and luxurious Tarentum, that invited him, was herself dismayed. With the foe driven out there was freedom to survey the plain, which now stood up high.<sup>2</sup> Here in that slaughtered pile could be discerned the spirit of each host: no man of thine but had been stricken in the breast, none of the foe who was not stabbed in the back. This truth is loudly proclaimed by the wounds of him who chanced on that day to be commander of the robbers, a man whom it is said the daughter of the greedy king had wedded; enveloped by the blindly flying dust and crushed under a mass of pikes he still carried the infamous marks of a shameful flight. Thus thy battalions hold the field with all its spoils and reap the reward of their prowess.

Meanwhile thou buildest on the two shores fleets for the Upper and the Lower Sea.<sup>3</sup> Down into the water falls every forest of the Apennines; for many a long day there is hewing on both slopes of those mountains so rich in ships' timber, mountains that send down to the sea as great an abundance of wood as of

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- Gallia continuis quamquam sit lassa tributis, 446  
 hoc censu placuisse cupit nec pondera sentit  
 quae prodesse probat. non tantis maior Atrides  
 Carpathium texit ratibus cum Doricus hostis  
 Sigceas rapturus opes Rhoeteia clausit 450  
 Pergama; nec tantae Seston iuncturus Abydo  
 Xerxes classis erat tumidas cum sterneret undas  
 et pontum sub ponte daret, cum stagna superbo  
 irrupit temerata gradu turmaeque frequentes  
 Hellespontiaco persultavere profundo; 455  
 nec sic Leucadio classis Mareotica portu  
 Actiacas abscondit aquas, in bella mariti  
 dum venit a Phario dotalis turba Canopo,  
 cum patrio Cleopatra ferox circumdata sistro  
 milite vel piceo fulvas onerata carinas 460  
 Dorida diffusam premeret Ptolomaide gaza.  
 hoc tu non cultu pugnas, sed more priorum  
 dite magis ferro, merito cui subiacet aurum  
 divitis ignavi. tales ne sperne rebelles:  
 etsi non acies, decorant tamen ista triumphos. 465  
 nec me Lageam stirpem memorasse pigebit  
 hostis ad exemplum vestri; namque auguror hisdem  
 regnis fortunam similem, cum luxus in illa  
 parte sit aequalis nec peior Caesar in ista.  
 Illicet aggredieris quod nullus tempore nostro 470

467. *isdem CTP.*

<sup>1</sup> A timely hint to Majorian!

<sup>2</sup> *pontum sub ponte*: cf. 23. 44.

<sup>3</sup> These lines describe the muster of Majorian's forces and the march over the Alps into Gaul. Modern historians (e.g. Hodgkin and Bury) absurdly imagine that the reference is to an expedition into Pannonia. The list of peoples in vv. 474-477 is a lurid commentary on Rome's dependence upon foreign contingents to do her fighting, although Sidonius ingeniously turns a lamentable fact into a compliment to Majorian. The poet makes it abundantly clear that Majorian

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waters. Gaul, though wearied by unceasing tribute,<sup>1</sup> is now eager to gain approval by a new levy for this end, and feels not a burden wherein she beholds a benefit. The elder son of Atreus did not cover the Carpathian Sea with so many ships when the Dorian foe, bent on seizing the wealth of Sigeum, beleaguered Rhoeteian Perganum; not so vast was the fleet that Xerxes had when he sought to link Sestos with Abydos and paved the swelling waters, setting a bridge over the breakers,<sup>2</sup> and with haughty step burst in upon the outraged flood, and his multitudinous squadrons pranced over the Hellespontine deep. Not so fully did the Mareotic fleet in Leucas' harbour hide the waters of Actium, when a multitude that was a woman's dower came from Egyptian Canopus to fight her husband's battles, and proud Cleopatra, with her country's sistrum girded upon her and her yellow boats loaded with pitch-black warriors, weighted the wide sea with the treasure of the Ptolemies. Thou dost not fight in this array, but rather as our forerunners did, with wealth of steel, whereto the wealthy coward's gold submits. Yet scorn not such troublers of the peace, for these splendours, though they grace not the ranks of battle, grace the pageantry of a triumph. And truly I shall never grieve to have mentioned the house of Lagos as prototype of thy foe; for I forecast a like fate for these two kingdoms, since on their side the luxuriousness is equal, and on our side is a Caesar as good as there was then.

<sup>3</sup> Straightway thou dost attempt what no emperor began early in his reign to organise an army and a navy for an attack on Geiseric in Africa. The muster here described has that ultimate end in view, though the troubles in Gaul had first to be settled. See also n. on 364 sq.

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Augustus potuit: rigidum septemplex Histri  
 agmen in arma rapis. nam quidquid languidus axis  
 cardine Sithonio sub Parrhase parturit Vrsa,  
 hoc totum tua signa pavet; Bastarna, Suebus,  
 Pannonius, Neurus, Chunus, Geta, Dacus, Halanus,  
 Bellonotus, Rugus, Burgundio, Vesus, Alites, 476  
 Bisalta, Ostrogothus, Procrustes, Sarmata, Moschus  
 post aquilas venere tuas; tibi militat omnis  
 Caucasus et Scythicae potor Tanaiticus undae.  
 quid faciat fortuna viri? quascumque minatur, 480  
 has tremuit iam Roma manus; modo principe sub te  
 ne metuat prope parva putat, nisi serviat illi  
 quod timuit regnante alio.

Iam castra movebas

et te diversis stipabant milia signis;  
 obsequium gens una negat, quae nuper ab Histro 485  
 rettulit indomitum solito truculentior agmen  
 quod dominis per bella caret, populoque superbo  
 Tuldila plectendas in proelia suggerit iras.  
 hic tu vix armis positis iterum arma retractas:  
 Bistonides veluti Ciconum cum forte pruinas 490  
 Ogygiis complent thiasis, seu Strymonos arvis  
 seu se per Rhodopen seu qua nimbosus in aequor  
 volvit Hyperboreis in cautibus Iismarus Hebrum  
 dat somno vaga turba, simul lassata quiescunt

<sup>1</sup> The reference is almost certainly to the Huns. Tuldila is not mentioned elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* soon after the battle described in *vv.* 385–440. The mutiny obviously occurred in Italy, before the passage of the Alps. Presumably it affected only a part of the Hun contingent.

<sup>3</sup> "Thracian . . . Theban," a silly paradox; "Theban" here means little more than "Bacchanalian."

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in our time has availed to do: thou dost carry off to war the frozen army of the seven-mouthed Danube. All the multitude that the sluggish quarter of the earth doth produce in the Sithonian region beneath the Arcadian bear fears thy standards; Bastarnian, Suebian, Pannonian, Neuran, Hun, Getan, Dacian, Alan, Bellonotan, Rugian, Burgundian, Visigoth, Alites, Bisalta, Ostrogoth, Procrustian, Sarmatian, Moschan have ranged themselves behind thine eagles; in thy service are the whole Caucasus and the drinker of the Don's Scythian waters. What shall such a hero's fortune accomplish? Every band wherewith he now threatens others has at some time caused Rome to tremble; but now under thy sovereignty she counts it almost a small thing to be free from fear, unless she also sees humbly at her service that which she feared when another reigned.

Now thou wert moving thy camp, and around thee thronged thousands under divers standards. Only one race<sup>1</sup> denied thee obedience, a race who had lately, in a mood even more savage than their wont, withdrawn their untamed host from the Danube because they had lost their lords in warfare, and Tuldila stirred in that unruly multitude a mad lust of fighting for which they must needs pay dear. Hereupon, having scarce laid down thine arms,<sup>2</sup> thou takest them up again; as when the Thracian women fill the frosty land of the Ciconians with Theban<sup>3</sup> troops of revellers, and on the fields by the Strymon or over the slopes of Rhodope, or where cloudy Hismarus rolls Hebrus down amid the Hyperborean rocks to the sea, the roaming band give themselves up to sleep, and

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orgia et ad biforem reboat nec tibia flatum;      495  
vix requies, iam †ponte ligant † rotat enthea  
thyrsum

Bassaris et maculis Erythraeae nebridos horrens  
excitat Odrysios ad marcida tympana mystas.  
tu tamen hanc differs poenam, sed sanguinis auctor.  
maioris, dum parcis, eras. non pertulit ultra      500  
hoc pro te plus cauta manus vestrumque pudorem  
sprevit pro vobis; primi cadit hostia belli  
quisque rebellis erat. praedam quoque dividis illis,  
mens devota quibus fuerat: quae territa servit  
exemplo, gaudet pretio. Pharsalica Caesar      505  
arva petens subitas ferro compescuit iras;  
sed sua membra secans, ut causae mole coactus,  
flevit quos perimit; vestris haec proficit armis  
seditio: quodcumque iubes, nisi barbarus audit,  
hic cadit, ut miles timeat.      510

Iam tempore brumae

Alpes marmoreas atque occurrentia iuncto  
saxa polo rupesque vitri siccamque minantes  
per scopulos pluviam primus pede carpis et idem  
lubrica praemisso firmas vestigia conto.  
coeperat ad rupis medium quae maxima turba est  
interno squalere gelu, quod colle supino      516  
artatis conclusa viis reptare rigenti  
non poterat revoluta solo: fors unus ab illo

496. sponte *T*: iam sponte vicens *R. M. Henry*.

507. ut ego (*Class. Quart. loc. cit.* p. 19): et.

<sup>1</sup> See n. on 2. 447. Things connected with Bacchus are, like the god himself, often associated with India.

<sup>2</sup> The famous mutiny of the Ninth Legion at Placentia, 49 B.C.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. ice. See n. on 2. 271.

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straightway the rout falls into wearied repose, and no longer does the breath awake a resounding note in the double pipe; but scarce has rest begun, when . . . an inspired Bassarid once more whirls the thyrsus, and, bristling in her dappled garb of Erythraean<sup>1</sup> fawn-skin, rouses the Odrysian votaries to beat the languid tabors. Yet thou didst put off the punishment of this offence; but in sparing thou didst cause greater bloodshed; for a band of thy men, more careful of thy weal, could bear this crime no longer, and for thy sake spurned thy mildness, and the rebels fell one and all, victims offered at the war's beginning. Thou didst divide the spoil among those whose hearts had been true; and these hearts, that trembled when they aided in the punishment, were cheered by their reward. Caesar, bound for the field of Pharsalia, stayed a mutinous outburst with the sword<sup>2</sup>; yet as he thus cut off his own limbs, driven thereto by the compelling need of his cause, he wept for those he destroyed. But this rising was a benefit to thine arms; henceforth whatever thine orders might be, if a barbarian hearkened not he fell, that the soldiers might fear.

And now in winter thou didst thyself lead the way over the marble slopes of the Alps, over crags that rise to meet the sky, over rocks like glass and dry rain<sup>3</sup> resting amid threatening scaurs; and with a lance thrust out before thee thou didst steady thy slipping feet. Half-way up the mountain the main part of thy force felt a chilling frost encrusting their very hearts, for confined in narrow paths on a hill-slope they could not clamber up the frozen face, but ever rolled back; then it came to pass that one of the column, a man whose wheels had in

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agmine, canentem cuius rota triverat Histrum,  
 exclamat: "gladios malo et sollemne quieta 520  
 quod frigus de morte venit; mea torpor inertī  
 membra rigore ligat, quodam mihi corpus adustum  
 frigoris igne perit. sequimur sine fine labori  
 instantem iuvenem; quisquis fortissimus ille est  
 aut rex aut populus, castris modo clausus aprica 525  
 vel sub pelle iacet; nos anni vertimus usum.  
 quod iubet hic lex rebus erit; non flectitur umquam  
 a coeptis damnumque putat si temporis iras  
 vel per damna timet. qua dicam gente creatum  
 quem Scythia non patior? cuius lac tigridis infans  
 Hyrcana sub rupe bibit? quae sustulit istum 531  
 axe meo gravior tellus? en vertice summo  
 argentes cogit turmas ac frigora ridet,  
 dum solus plus mente calet. cum classica regis  
 Arctoi sequerer, Romani principis arma 535  
 Caesareumque larem luxu torpere perenni  
 audieram: dominos nil prodest isse priores  
 si rex hic quoque fortis erat." maiora parantem  
 dicere de scopulo verbis accendis amaris:  
 "quisquis es, oppositi metuis qui lubrica clivi, 540  
 frange cutem pendentis aquae scalpitoque fluento  
 sit tibi lymp̄ha gradus. turpes depone querelas;  
 otia frigus habent. numquid mihi membra biformis  
 Hylaei natura dedit? num Pegasus alis

537. isse] desso *M*.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2. 270.

<sup>2</sup> The word-play is made possible by the fact that *damnum* may mean "fault," "vice," as well as "loss."



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their time scoured the whitened Danube,<sup>1</sup> exclaimed: "I would rather have a sword-thrust and that common coldness that comes from a quiet death: numbness ties my limbs with cramping stiffness, and my body is seared and consumed by the burning cold. We follow a young general that persists in toil without ceasing; but even the bravest, whether king or people, is now enclosed in camp or fort or lies down under tents of skin in sunny places, while we pervert the uses of the year. What he orders will be a law to all creation. He is never turned from his enterprises, and he thinks his character is lost if even his losses make him fear the violence of the season.<sup>2</sup> Of what race must I pronounce him born, with whom I, a Scythian, cannot cope? What tigress gave suck to him in infancy under some Hyrcanian height? What land more severe than mine own clime reared him? Lo! on the very summit he musters his chilled squadrons, and laughs at the cold, for he alone has in his soul a warmth that is stronger. When I followed the standards of a northern king I heard that the emperor's arms and the house of the Caesars were sunk in unending luxury. It is no gain to me that my former lords are gone if, after all, there is here too a valiant king." He was ready to utter more violent words when thou, speaking from the crest, didst stir him with bitter taunts: "Whosoe'er thou art that fearest the slippery rise that confronts thee, break the skin of the hanging water, then dig into the flow and make the pool thy stepping-stone. Have done with thy base complaints; idleness is the cause of cold. Did nature give *me* the limbs of double-bodied Hylaeus? Did Pegasus help me with wings

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adiuvit, quidquid gradior, pennasque volanti 545  
 dat Calais Zetusque mihi, quem ninguida cernis  
 calcantem iam dorsa iugi? vos frigora frangunt,  
 vos Alpes? iam iam studeam pensare pruinas;  
 aestatem sub Syrte dabo." sic agmina voce  
 erigis exemploque levas primusque labores 550  
 aggredieris, quoscumque iubes; tum cetera paret  
 turba libens, servit propriis cum legibus auctor.

Qui tibi praeterea comites quantusque magister  
 militiae, vestrum post vos qui compulit agmen,  
 sed non invitum! dignus cui cederet uni 555  
 Sulla acie, genio Fabius, pietate Metellus,  
 Appius cloquio, vi Fulvius, arte Camillus.  
 si praefecturae quantus moderetur honorem  
 vir quaeras, tendit patulos qua Gallia fines,  
 vix habuit mores similes cui teste senatu 560  
 in se etiam tractum commiserat Vlpium ensem.  
 qui dictat modo iura Getis, sub iudice vestro

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<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* in Africa, fighting against the Vandals.

<sup>2</sup> This "Master of the Forces" cannot be the Patrician Ricimer. He may be either Nepotianus (father of the future emperor Julius Nepos), who seems to have obtained the rank of second *magister* under Avitus, or (less probably) Aegidius, who was *mag. militum per Gallias* from 458 to 463 (according to the usual account: Stein, p. 560, thinks otherwise). The holder of this district-command had for some years been dignified with the title *magister utriusque militiae*; the original title was *mag. equitum per Gallias*. See also n. on 7. 359 sqq.

<sup>3</sup> Q. Caecilius Metellus Pius (consul, 80 B.C.) received his extra surname owing to the strenuous efforts which he made to secure the recall of his father, Metellus Numidicus, from exile.

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over the ground I tread? Do I fly with plumage bestowed by Calais and Zethus—I, whom thou seest already trampling the snow-clad brow of this ridge? Art *thou* overcome by the cold, by the Alps? Then 'tis time I sought to compensate thee for the frosts; I will give thee a summer near the Syrtes."<sup>1</sup> Thus dost thou brace thy troops with thy words and cheer them by thine example, ever the first to essay whatever tasks thou dost order; and the others willingly obey when the lawgiver makes himself the servant of his own laws.

And what a staff thou hadst, and what a Master of the Forces!<sup>2</sup> He it was who pushed on the line of men behind thee—right willing men, 'tis true. To him, of all men, Sulla might well have given precedence in fighting, Fabius in talent, Metellus<sup>3</sup> in filial loyalty, Appius in eloquence, Fulvius<sup>4</sup> in energy, Camillus in skill. And if it should be asked how great is the man who wields the Prefect's<sup>5</sup> office where Gaul extends her wide lands—he is a man scarce equalled in goodness by him to whom, with the senate as witness, Trajan entrusted a drawn sword to be used even against himself.<sup>6</sup> Under thy judge he who now gives laws to the Goths—he, our skin-clad foe—doth respect the

<sup>1</sup> Q. Fulvius Flaccus (consul in 237, 224, 212, and 209 B.C.), a great general. Along with Ap. Claudius Pulcher he took Capua in 212 B.C.

<sup>2</sup> The new Praetorian Prefect of Gaul was Magnus. See n. on 23. 455.

<sup>3</sup> It is related that Trajan, on handing to a praetorian prefect the sword which was the badge of his office, said, "Take this, to be used in my defence if I act well, against me if I act ill." (Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 13, Cass. Dio LXVIII. 16. 1; cf. Plin. *Pan.* 67.)

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pellitus ravum praeconem suspicit hostis.  
 quid loquar hic illum qui scrinia sacra gubernat,  
 qui, cum civilis dispenset partis habenas, 565  
 sustinet armati curas, interprete sub quo  
 flectitur ad vestras gens effera condiciones?  
 quid laudare Petrum parvis, temeraria Clio,  
 viribus aggredieris? cuius dignatur ab ore  
 Caesar in orbe loqui, licet et quaestore disertò 570  
 polleat; attamen hic nuper, placidissime princeps,  
 obside percepto nostrae de moenibus urbis  
 visceribus miseris insertum depulit enseni.  
 et quia lassatis nimium spes unica rebus  
 venisti, nostris, petimus, succurre ruinis 575  
 Lugdunumque tuam, dum praeteris, aspice victor:  
 otia post nimios poscit te fracta labores.  
 cui pacem das, redde animum: lassata iuveni  
 cervix deposito melius post sulcat aratro  
 telluris glaebam solidae. bove, fruge, colono, 580  
 civibus exhausta est. stantis fortuna latebat;  
 dum capitur, vae quanta fuit! post gaudia, princeps,

563. *suscipit LCFP.*

---

<sup>1</sup> The reference is obviously to Theodoric II, but it is mere hyperbole or sanguine prophecy. The Gallic rising had roused the Visigoths to war, and it was not till the following year, when Aegidius drove them back from the walls of Arles, that they submitted and made a treaty with Majorian. *Iudice* refers to the praetorian prefect, as head of the judicature. There may have been a truce with Theodoric at the time when the Panegyric was delivered. It is also possible that there were some Visigoths in the conquered garrison of Lugdunum. The variant reading *suscipit* in v. 563 might possibly mean "is

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

hoarse-voiced usher of the court.<sup>1</sup> Why tell here of him who controls the Sacred Bureau,<sup>2</sup> who, while he guides the reins of a civil office, supports also the cares of a man-at-arms; with whom as spokesman a wild race is won over to your terms?<sup>3</sup> But why, ~~my~~ rash Muse, dost thou essay with thy puny strength to praise Petrus? Through his lips Caesar deigns to speak all over the world, although he hath also a tower of strength in his eloquent quaestor;<sup>4</sup> nay, this man lately, O most gracious Emperor, took hostages and thrust off from the walls of our city the sword that had been driven into our hapless flesh. And since thou hast come hither as the only hope for our exhausted fortunes, we pray and beseech thee, save our ruins, and, as thou passest on, let thine eye survey thy Lugdunum in thine hour of victory; broken, she asks thee for rest after toils too great to bear. Give fresh heart to her to whom thou givest peace. When the steer's neck is wearied he will afterwards furrow the solid clods all the better if the plough is laid aside for a time. The town is drained of her oxen, her provender, her farmers, her citizens. In her days of strength her fortune was unnoticed, but in the hour of her capture, alas, how great it was! When joy has come, my

adopting," i.e. he is copying the Roman legal procedure in his own domain; but *suspicit* is almost certainly right.

<sup>2</sup> As Imperial secretary (*magister epistularum*) Petrus (on whom see 3. 5 n.) controlled one of the three great bureaux of the civil service.

<sup>3</sup> The Burgundians, who had been received into Lugdunum by the Gallo-Roman insurgents.

<sup>4</sup> The quaestor was probably Domnulus, who is mentioned as a poet in 14 § 2; cf. *Epist.* IX. 13. 4, IX. 15. 1 *carm.* 38. *Epist.* IV. 25 is addressed to him. On the *quaestor sacri Palatii* as mouthpiece of the Emperor see n. on 1. 25.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

delectat meminisse mali. populatibus, igni  
 etsi concidimus, veniens tamen omnia tecum  
 restituïs : fuimus vestri quia causa triumphî, 585  
 ipsa ruina placet. cum victor scandere currum  
 incipies crinemque sacrum tibi more priorum  
 nectet muralis, vallaris, civica laurus  
 et regum aspicient Capitolia fulva catenas,  
 cum vesties Romam spoliis, cum divite cera 590  
 pinges Cinyphii captiva mapalia Bocchi,  
 ipse per obstantes populos raucosque fragores  
 praecedam et tenui, sicut nunc, carmine dicam  
 te geminas Alpes, Syrtes te, te mare magnum,  
 te freta, te Libycas pariter domuisse catervas, 595  
 ante tamen vicisse mihi. quod lumina flectis  
 quodque serenato miseros iam respicis ore,  
 exsultare libet : memini, cum parcere velles,  
 hic tibi vultus erat ; mitis dat signa venustas.  
 annue : sic vestris respiret Byrsa tropaeis, 600  
 sic Parthus certum fugiat Maurusque timore  
 albus eat ; sic Susa tremant positisque pharetris  
 exarmata tuum circumstent Bactra tribunal.

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<sup>1</sup> Pictures or models of conquered places were often exhibited in Roman triumphal processions. Bocchus is used as a typical name of a north-African king.

## V. PANEGYRIC ON MAIORIANUS

Emperor, 'tis pleasant to remember the evil days. Prostrated though we are by devastation and by fire, thou by thy coming dost restore all things; and since we were the cause of thy triumph, our very fall is pleasing. When thou shalt step into the victor's chariot and after the manner of our forefathers the mural, castrensian and civic crowns shall entwine thy sacred hair, and the golden Capitol shall behold kings in chains; when thou shalt clothe Rome with spoils and shalt depict in costly wax the captured huts of some African Bocchus,<sup>1</sup> then I myself will walk before thee amid the obstructing throngs and the clamour of hoarse shouts, and in my puny strain, as now, I will tell how thou hast subdued two Alpine ranges,<sup>2</sup> the Syrtes, the Great Sea, the narrower waters, and the Libyan hordes; but first I will tell how thou didst conquer for my benefit. I am fain to leap for joy that thou dost turn thine eyes and already regardest the unfortunate with brightened countenance. I remember well, when thou wert minded to be merciful, such was ever thy look; a benign graciousness gives the sign. Grant my prayer: so may Byrsa<sup>3</sup> draw breath again through thy victories; so may the Parthian flee in good earnest and the Moor go his way white with fear; so may Susa tremble and the Bactrians lay aside their quivers and stand disarmed around thy tribunal!

<sup>2</sup> The Alps and the Pyrenees. Majorian was going to proceed to Spain.

<sup>3</sup> 2. 351 n.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

## VI

### PRAEFATIO PANEGYRICI DICTI AVITO AVGVSTO

Pallados armisonae festum dum cantibus ortum . .  
personat Hismario Thracia vate chelys,  
et dum Mopsopium stipantur per Marathonem  
qui steterant fluvii quaeque cucurrit humus,  
dulcisonum quatitur fidibus dum pectine murmur, 5  
has perhibent laudes laude probasse deam :  
“ diva, Gigantei fudit quam tempore belli  
armatus partus vertice dividuo,  
quam neque Deliacis peperit Latona sub antris,  
fixura errantem Cyclada pignoribus, 10  
nec quae Cadmeis pariens Alciden in oris  
suspendit triplici nocte puerperium,  
nec cuius pluvio turris madefacta metallo est,  
cum matrem impleret filius aurigena :  
sed te, cum trepidum spectaret Phlegra Tonantem,  
impulit excussam vertice ruptus apex ; 16  
cumque deos solae traherent in proelia vires  
confusum valde te sine robur erat :  
protulit ut mox te patrius, Sapientia, vertex,  
tum mage vicerunt, te cum habuere dei. 20  
te propter cessit, manibus constructa tremendis,  
iam prope per rutilum machina tensa polum.

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<sup>1</sup> The Ismarian (Thracian) bard is Orpheus.

<sup>2</sup> The meaning of this absurdity will be clear from 2. 70-74 and 23. 185-194.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. Attic.

<sup>4</sup> When Leto (Latona), fleeing from the persecution of Hera (Juno), reached the floating island of Delos, it suddenly became stationary. There Artemis (Diana) and Apollo were born.



## VI. PREFACE TO AVITUS

### VI

#### PREFACE TO THE PANEGYRIC ADDRESSED TO THE EMPEROR AVITUS

While the Thracian lyre in the hands of the Ismarian<sup>1</sup> bard celebrated in ringing song the glorious birth of Pallas with her clashing arms; while rivers that stood and earth that ran<sup>2</sup> were thronging close in Mopsopian<sup>3</sup> Marathon, and the quill twanged out its sweet notes on the strings, the goddess, 'tis said, commended with her praise these praises: "Hail, divine one, whom a birth full-armed sent forth from the opened head at the time of the giant-war, whom Latona bore not in the depths of the Delian cave, fain to fix the wandering Cyclad for her offspring's sake<sup>4</sup>; no, nor she who in bringing forth Alcides in the land of Cadmus delayed her travail for three nights, nor she whose tower was steeped in the rain of metal, when the gold-begotten son began to cumber his mother; but while Phlegra<sup>5</sup> beheld the Thunderer alarmed, the crown of his head burst open and thou wert shot forth from its summit; and as brute force and naught else was impelling the gods to battle, their might without thee had been sorely confounded; but after thy father's head had brought thee forth, O goddess of Wisdom, then the gods, with thee to aid, were victorious as ne'er before. Thanks to thee that great pile gave way which was built by those dread hands and at last well-nigh pierced the

<sup>5</sup> The plains of Phlegra were the scene of the battle between gods and giants.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Pindus, Othrys, Pholoe dextris cecidere Gigantum,  
    decidit et Rhoeti iam gravis Ossa manu.  
sternitur Aegaeon, Briareus, Ephialta Mimasque, 25  
    Arctoas sueti lambere calce rotas.  
Enceladus patri iacuit fratrique Typhoeus ;  
    Euboicam hic rupem sustinet, hic Siculam.”  
Hinc sese ad totam genetricem transtulit Orpheus  
    et docuit chordas dicere Calliopam. 30  
assurrexerunt Musae sub laude sororis  
    et placuit divae carmine plus pietas.  
quod si maternas laudes cantasse favori est  
    nec valeo priscas aequiperare fides,  
publicus hic pater est, vovi cui carmen, Avitus : 35  
    materia est maior si mihi Musa minor.

### VII

#### PANEGYRICVS

Phoebe, peragrato tandem visurus in orbe  
quem possis perferre parem, da lumina caelo :  
sufficit hic terris. nec se iam signifer astris

VI 30. decuit *MPTE*.

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<sup>1</sup> The snaky extremities of the giants, ending in mouths instead of feet, are treated with elaborate absurdity in 9. 76-87.

## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

flaming firmament. Pindus, Othrys, and Pholoe fell from the grasp of the giants; down at last fell ponderous Ossa from Rhoetus' hand; Aegeon was laid low, and Briareus and Ephialtes and Mimas, who were wont to lick the northern Wain with their feet.<sup>1</sup> Enceladus fell by thy father's hand, Typhoeus by thy brother's; and now the one supports an Euboean<sup>2</sup> mountain, the other a Sicilian."

Then Orpheus changed his theme, making his mother the whole burden of his song, and teaching the strings to hymn Calliope. The Muses rose in homage at this praise of their sister, and the goddess was gladdened even more by a son's devotion than by his song. But if it is well pleasing to sing a *mother's* praises, and if I lack the power to match the ancient lyre, yet in Avitus, to whom I have vowed my song, we have here the *father* of his people, and though my muse be weaker, my theme is greater.

## VII

### PANEGYRIC<sup>3</sup>

O Sun-god, now at last in the circle of thy wanderings thou canst see one that thou art able to brook as thine equal; so give thy rays to heaven, for he is sufficient to lighten the earth. Nor need the

<sup>2</sup> A far-fetched epithet. Typhoeus was buried under the island of Inarime (Verg. *Aen.* IX. 716, Lucan V. 101), the modern Ischia, near "Euboean" Cumae (Verg. *Aen.* VI. 2). According to another version he, like Enceladus, was buried under Etna.

<sup>3</sup> Jan. 1, A.D. 456. See Introd., p. xxxvii.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

iactet, Marmaricus quem vertice conterit Atlans :  
 sidera sunt isti. quae sicut mersa nitescunt, 5  
 adversis sic Roma micat, cui fixus ab ortu  
 ordo fuit crevisse malis. modo principe surgit  
 consule ; nempe, patres, collatos cernere fasces  
 vos iuvat et sociam sceptris mandasse curulem :  
 credite, plus dabitur : currus. iam necte bifrontes, 10  
 anceps Iane, comas duplicique accingere lauro.  
 principis anterior, iam consulis iste coruscat  
 annus, et emerita trabeis diademata crescunt.  
 incassum iam, Musa, paves quod propulit Auster  
 vela ratis nostrae ; pelago quia currere famae 15  
 coepimus, en sidus, quod nos per caerula servet.

Forte pater superum prospexit ab aethere terras :  
 ecce viget quodcumque videt ; mundum reparasse  
 aspexisse fuit ; solus fovet omnia nutus.  
 iamque ut convenient superi, Tegeaticus ales 20  
 nunc plantis, nunc fronte volat. vix contigit arva  
 et toto descendit avo : mare terra vel aer  
 indigenas misere deos. germane Tonantis,

7. surgit *M* : surget. *Vid. Class. Quart. loc. cit. p. 19.*

20. ales *Bitschowsky* : archas.

21-23. *dist. ego* ; *vid. Class. Quart. ib. ; cf. 7. 360 sq.*

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<sup>1</sup> *Marmaricus* is used by poets for "African" ; cf. 11. 103, 23. 56. *Marmarica* lay between Egypt and the Greater Syrtes, and was therefore far from the Atlas range. In 5. 337, *Marmarides* is used in its strict sense, and in *v.* 448 below the *Marmaricans* are distinguished from the *Massylians*, another north-African people.

<sup>2</sup> See 5. 63 n.

<sup>3</sup> "double," because it encircles two brows.

<sup>4</sup> For the meaning of *trabea* see n. on XV. 150 sq.

<sup>5</sup> Mercury. *Tegeaticus* means no more than "Arcadian" : see n. on l. 7. The "feet" and the "brow" allude to the wings attached to his sandals and to his forehead. According

## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

Zodiac, that is grazed by the head of Marmaric<sup>1</sup> Atlas, make boast of its constellations; for this man also hath his stars, and as stars sink only to shine forth once more, so doth Rome's light flash forth out of her calamities; since from her very beginning  $\Pi$  hath been her fixed destiny to grow greater by misfortunes.<sup>2</sup> Now she begins to rise once more with an emperor for consul. Surely, O Senators, it delights you to see the fasces of two dignities combined and to think that ye have assigned a curule chair to bear the sceptre company! Believe me, ye shall yet give more—a triumphal chariot! Now bind, O two-headed Janus, the locks of thy twin brows, encircling them with a double<sup>3</sup> wreath of laurel. Last year was illustrious as the emperor's, this year is glorious as the consul's; and the diadem that has served us so well is enhanced by the state robes of a magistrate.<sup>4</sup> Now, O Muse, idle is the fear thou dost feel because the breeze hath driven out to sea the sails of my bark; as I have begun to speed over the ocean of fame—behold the star that is to protect me throughout the blue expanse!

It chanced that the father of the gods looked forth from heaven upon the earth. Lo! whatever he beholds is quickened; to view the world is to renew it; his mere nod revives all things. Thereupon, to bid the gods assemble, the winged god of Tegea<sup>5</sup> speeds his flight now with his feet, now with his brow. Scarce has he descended the whole length of his grandfather<sup>6</sup> and touched the fields when sea, earth, and air send their native divinities. First to another idea the second pair of wings was attached to his hat (*petasus*).

<sup>1</sup> Atlas: cf. Verg. *Aen.* IV. 258. For the fusion of the god with his domain cf. 2. 333 and 426-8, 22. 41-46.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

prime venis, viridi qui Dorida findere curru  
 suetus in attonita spargis cito terga serenum ; 25  
 umentes Nymphas Phorcus comitatur ibique  
 glaucus, Glauce, venis, vatum et certissime Proteu,  
 certus eras. longo veniunt post ordine divi :  
 pampineus Liber, Mars trux, Tiryntius hirtus,  
 nuda Venus, fecunda Ceres, pharetrata Diana, 30  
 Iuno gravis, prudens Pallas, turrita Cybebe,  
 Saturnus profugus, vaga Cynthia, Phoebus ephēbus,  
 Pan pavidus, Fauni rigidi, Satyri petulantes.  
 convenere etiam caelum virtute tenentes,  
 Castor equo, Pollux caestu, Perseus harpe, 35  
 fulmine Vulcanus, Tiphys rate, gente Quirinus.  
 quis canat hic aulam caeli, rutilantia cuius  
 ipsa pavementum sunt sidera ?

Iam pater aureo

tranquillus sese solio locat, inde priores  
 consedere dei (fluviis quoque contigit illo, 40  
 sed senibus, residere loco, tibi, maxime fluctu  
 Eridane et flavis in pocula fracte Sygambris,  
 Rhene tumens, Scythiaequē vagis equitate catervis  
 Hister et ignotum plus notus, Nile, per ortum) :  
 cum procul erecta caeli de parte trahebat 45

35. Perseus *def. Brakman* : tum Perseus *Mohr*, Danaeius *Wilamowitz*.

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<sup>1</sup> Colour-names in ancient literature are notoriously vague; a good example of this is found in 10. 5 sq., where first *viridis* and then *caeruleus* is applied both to Nereus and to his dress. In 15. 132 the dress of Glaucus is called *viridis*. The adjective *glaucus*, unlike *caeruleus*, is never applied to the deep blue of the sky, but there is regularly an element of blue in its connotation. It is applied to the sea and other expanses of water, to water-deities, to plants (especially, like Greek γλαυκός, to the grey-green of the olive), to the

## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

comes the Thunderer's own brother, who, accustomed as he is to cleave the sea with his green chariot, now quickly spreads calm over the amazed surface. Phorcus comes with the dripping nymphs, Glaucus too, green as his name<sup>1</sup>; Proteus also, surest of seers, was there in sure presence.<sup>2</sup> After them comes a long array of divine beings; Liber, lord of the vine, fierce Mars, the shaggy hero of Tiryns, naked Venus, fruitful Ceres, Diana with her quiver, staid Juno, wise Pallas, tower-crowned Cybele, Saturn the exile, fair young Phoebus, pavid Pan, the uncouth Fauns, the wanton Satyrs. There also assembled those that inhabit heaven by virtue of their prowess—Castor by the steed, Pollux by the boxing-glove, Perseus by the scimitar, Vulcan by the thunderbolt, Tiphys by the ship, Quirinus by his people. Who could sing here below of heaven's great hall, whose floor the flaming stars themselves compose?

Now the great Father serenely sat him down on his golden throne; then the chiefest gods took their seats (and even to the rivers, such of them as are aged, the right to be seated in that place has been given,—Eridanus, mightiest in his torrent, the swelling Rhine, that the yellow-haired Sygambrian breaks to fill his cups, Danube, crossed on horseback by Scythia's nomad hordes, and Nile, known all the better for his unknown source). Lo! afar, from a lofty tract of sky, came Rome, dragging her slow

human eye (5. 240), and to many other things (including animals). No uniform translation is possible; such words as "blue," "green," "blue-green" (the meaning here), "blue-grey," "grey-green" will serve at various times. A full list of citations is now available in the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. not in one of his numerous disguises (Semple, p. 88).

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

pigros Roma gradus, curvato cernua collo  
 ora ferens; pendent crines de vertice, tecti  
 pulvere, non galea, clipeusque impingitur aegris  
 gressibus, et pondus, non terror, fertur in hasta.  
 utque pii genibus primum est adfusa Tonantis, 50  
 "testor, sancte parens," inquit, "te numen et illud,  
 quidquid Roma fui: summo satis obruta fato  
 invideo abiectis; pondus non sustinet ampli  
 culminis arta domus nec fulmen vallibus instat.  
 quid, rogo, bis seno mihi vulture Tuscus haruspex 55  
 portendit? iaciens primae cur moenia genti  
 ominibus iam celsa fui, dum collis Etrusci  
 fundamenta iugis aperis mihi, Romule pauper?  
 plus gladio secura fui cum turbine iuncto  
 me Rutulus, Veiens pariterque Auruncus et Ae-  
 quus, 60  
 Hernicus et Volscus premerent. sat magna videbar  
 et tibi dum rumpit vitiatum femina ferro  
 corpus et ad castum remeas, pudor erute, vulnus.  
 iam cum vallatam socio me clausit Etrusco  
 Tarquinius: pro Muci ignes! pro Coclitis undae! 65  
 pro dolor! hic quonam est qui sub mea iura redegit  
 Samnitem, Gurgēs, Volsci qui terga cecidit,  
 Marcius, et Senones fundens dictator et exul?  
 Fabricii vitam vellem, mortes Deciorum,  
 vel sic vincentem vel sic victos: mea redde 70

<sup>1</sup> For similar utterances on the perils of greatness and the blessed security of a low estate see commentators on Hor. *C.* II. 10. 9-12, Vollmer on Stat. *Silv.* II. 7. 90.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. 357 sq. The twelve vultures which appeared to Romulus were interpreted as portending a duration of twelve centuries for Rome. According to the usual dating of the foundation of the city this period ended in A.D. 447. In the middle of the fifth century many people recalled the old augury with superstitious dread. See Gibbon, c. 35, last par.



## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

steps along, with neck bent and head bowed; her hair hung limply down, covered not with a helmet but with dust; at each feeble step her shield knocked against her, and in her spear there was no terror, but only heaviness. Flinging herself at the feet of gracious Jove she cried: "O holy Father, I call thee to witness—thee and that divinity of other days, all that I, Rome, have been: wholly overwhelmed by my exalted fortune, I envy the very outcast; a narrow house has not a spacious roof to support, and the lowly vales are not harassed by the lightning.<sup>1</sup> What, pray, did the Tuscan seer foretell for me from the twelve vultures?<sup>2</sup> Why is it that when but beginning to build walls for my infant people I was already raised on high by omens of greatness, when Romulus in his poverty dug foundations for me on the ridge of the Tuscan hill? Through my sword I knew greater safety than now, when in a massed hurricane Rutulian, Veientine, Aequian, Hernican, and Volscian bore down upon me. Mighty enough I seemed even to thee when the woman stabbed with the knife her sullied body, and her ravished honour returned with that chaste wound.<sup>3</sup> Tarquin with his Etruscan ally shut me within my new-built rampart. Alas for the fire that Mucius, the water that Horatius braved! Woe is me! Where is there here a Gurgus<sup>4</sup>—the man who brought the Samnite under my sway? Where the Marcius who cut down the flying Volscian, or he who routed the Senones, a dictator and an exile?<sup>5</sup> Would that I had Fabricius as he lived, the Decii as they died, victory such as his or defeat like theirs:

<sup>3</sup> Lucretia.

<sup>4</sup> Q. Fabius Maximus Gurgus.

<sup>5</sup> Camillus: cf. 2. 526 sq.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

principia. heu! quo nunc pompae ditesque triumph  
et pauper consul? Libycum mea terruit axem  
cuspis et infido posui iuga tertia Poeno.

Indorum Ganges, Colchorum Phasis, Araxes  
Armeniae, Ger Aethiopum Tanaisque Getarum 75

Thybrinum tremuere meum. me Teutone iuncto  
quondam fracte subis Cimber, gladiisque gravatas  
ante manus solas iussi portare catenas.

vae mihi! qualis eram, cum per mea iussa iuberent  
Sulla, Asiatogenes, Curius, Paulus, Pompeius 80

Tigrani, Antiocho, Pyrrho, Persae, Mithridati  
pacem ac regna, fugam, vectigal, vincla, venenum.

Sauromatem taceo ac Moschum solitosque cruentum  
lac potare Getas ac pocula tingere venis

vel, cum diffugiunt, fugiendos tum mage Persas. 85

nec terras dixisse sat est: fulgentibus armis

tot maria intravi duce te longeque remotas

sole sub occiduo gentes. victricia Caesar

signa Caledonios transvexit ad usque Britannos;

fuderit et quamquam Scotum et cum Saxone Pictum,

hostes quaesivit, quem iam natura vetabat 91

quaerere plus homines. vidit te frangere Leucas,

trux Auguste, Pharon, dum classicus Actia miles

stagna quatit profugisque bibax Antonius armis

incestam vacuat patrio Ptolomaida regno. 95

80. *fort.* Asiatogenes *Luetjohann*: Asiagenes.

81. Perseo *Luetjohann*: perso (*perse M*) *could*.

82. *ac add.* ego: *an et?* patria regna *Mohr*.

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<sup>1</sup> The correspondences are: Sulla, Mithridates, poison (a flagrant inaccuracy); Asiaticus, Antiochus, tribute; Curius,

## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

give me back my beginnings! Alas! Where now are those pageants, those triumphs rich of a consul poor? My spears affrighted Libya's clime, and I laid the yoke even a third time upon the faithless Carthaginian. Ganges of the Indian, Phasis of the Colchian, Araxes of Armenia, Ger of the Ethiopians, Tanais of the Getae, all trembled before my Tiber. I bethink me too of the Cimbrian and the leagued Teuton shattered of old, when I ordered hands till then loaded with the sword to carry naught but chains. Alas for what I was when at my bidding Sulla, Asiaticus, Curius, Paulus, Pompeius demanded of Tigranes, Antiochus, Pyrrhus, Perseus, and Mithridates peace and realms, banishment, tribute, chains, and poison!<sup>1</sup> I say naught of the Sauromatians or of the Moschans or of the Getae, whose wont it is to drink bloody milk and stain their cups with severed veins; or of the Persians,<sup>2</sup> most to be shunned when they shun the foe. Nor is it enough to speak of the land alone, for with thee to guide me I have entered many a sea and nations far away under the setting sun. Caesar took his victorious legions over even to the Caledonian Britons, and although he routed the Scot, the Pict and the Saxon, he still looked for foes where nature forbade him to look any more for men. Leucas saw the fierce Augustus shatter Egypt, when the warriors of the fleet shook the waters of Actium and the tippler Antonius by the rout of his arms ousted the unclean daughter of the house of Ptolemy from her ancestral kingdom. And

Pyrrhus, flight; Paulus, Perseus, chains; Pompeius, Tigranes, peace and realms (the latter referring perhaps to the two provinces of Sophene and Gordyene).

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* The Parthians.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

cumque prius stricto quererer de cardine mundi,  
 nec limes nunc ipsa mihi. plus, summe deorum,  
 sum iusto tibi visa potens quod Parthicus ultro  
 restituit mea signa Sapor positoque tiara  
 funera Crassorum flevit dum purgat. et hinc iam 100  
 (pro dolor!) excusso populi iure atque senatus  
 quod timui incurri; sum tota in principe, tota  
 principis, et fio lacerum de Caesare regnum,  
 quae quondam regina fui; Capreasque Tiberi  
 et caligas Gai Claudii censura secuta est 105  
 et vir morte Nero; tristi Pisone verendum  
 Galbam sternis, Otho, speculo qui pulcher haberi  
 dum captas, ego turpis eram; mihi foeda Vitelli  
 intulit ingluvies ventrem, qui tempore parvo  
 regnans sero perit; lassam post inclitus armis 110  
 Vespasianus habet, Titus hinc, post hunc quoque  
 frater;  
 post quem tranquillus vix me mihi reddere Nerva  
 coepit, adoptivo factus de Caesare maior;  
 Vlpianus inde venit, quo formidata Sygambri  
 Agrippina fuit, fortis, pius, integer, acer. 115  
 talem capta precor. Traianum nescio si quis  
 aequiperet, ni fors iterum tu, Gallia, mittas

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* "the precincts of my own city are not intact" (Semple, p. 89).

<sup>2</sup> Phraates IV: see n. on 2. 457.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* successive Caesars are reducing Rome's dominion more and more.

<sup>4</sup> A reference to the nickname *Caligula* (= little military boot) given to Gaius in his boyhood by the soldiers, because he went about the barracks dressed like a soldier. For the allusions to Claudius and Otho in this passage see nn. on 5. 322 sq.

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I, who complained aforetime that the world's limits were too narrow, am now not even a boundary to myself.<sup>1</sup> O chiefest of the gods, I seemed to thee more powerful than is meet, inasmuch as the Parthian Sapor<sup>2</sup> freely restored my standards and, laying aside his royal tiara, wept for the deaths of the Crassi as he made atonement therefor. And hence now, woe is me! I have fallen upon the fate I feared, after wresting their rights from senate and people; I am merged in the Emperor, wholly the Emperor's property, and through Caesar I who was once a queen am becoming a mangled realm.<sup>3</sup> Tiberius with his Capri and Gaius with his soldier's boots<sup>4</sup> were followed by Claudius with his censorship and Nero, who in death played the man; Galba, to whom the stern Piso gave a claim to reverence, was laid low by Otho, who, while he sought by his mirror to seem beautiful, made me ugly. Then Vitellius, with his loathsome gluttony, thrust his paunch upon me, and though he reigned but a short time he perished all too late. Thus sore wearied was I when Vespasian, famed man of war, possessed me, and after him Titus, after Titus his brother; and after him the tranquil Nerva scarce began to make me myself again,—Nerva, who made himself greater by the Caesar he adopted. Then came Trajan, by whose doing Agrippina<sup>5</sup> became a terror to the Sygambrians, an emperor gallant, faithful, righteous and vigorous. In my captivity I pray for such another. I know not if anyone can match Trajan—unless perchance Gaul should once more<sup>6</sup> send forth a man

<sup>1</sup> Colonia Agrippina (Cologne).

<sup>6</sup> Trajan was a native of Spain, which was now included in the "Prefecture of the Gauls."

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qui vincat." lacrimae vocem clausere precantis,  
et quidquid superest luctus rogat. undique caeli  
assurgunt proceres, Mars, Cypris, Romulus et qui 120  
auctores tibi, Roma, dei; iam mitior ipsa  
flectitur atque iras veteres Saturnia donat.

Iuppiter ista refert: "Fatum, quo cuncta reguntur  
quoque ego, non licuit frangi. sat celsa laborant  
semper, et elatas nostro de munere vires 125  
invidit Fortuna sibi; sed concipe magnos,  
quamquam fracta, animos. si te Porsenna soluto  
plus timuit de ponte fremens, si moenia capta  
mox Brenni videre fugam, si denique dirum  
Hannibalem iuncto terrae caelique tumultu 130  
reppulimus (cum castra tuis iam proxima muris  
starent, Collina fulmen pro turre cucurrit,  
atque illic iterum timuit natura paventem  
post Phlegram pugnare Iovem): torpentia tolle  
lumina, deterksam mentem caligo relinquat. 135  
te mirum est vinci; incipies cum vincere, mirum  
non erit. utque tibi pateat quo surgere tandem  
fessa modo possis, paucis, cognosce, docebo.

"Est mihi, quae Latio se sanguine tollit alumnam,  
tellus clara viris, cui non dedit optima quondam 140  
rerum opifex natura parem; fecundus ab urbe

126. fortuna *M*: natura.

128. fremens *M*: tremens.

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<sup>1</sup> The Roman army was encamped between the Colline and Esquiline Gates when Hannibal approached Rome (Livy XXVI. 10. 1); the battlemented Colline Gate is called *Collina turris* also by Juvenal (VI. 291) and Claudian (*Gild.* 86). Livy mentions the blinding storms of rain and hail, which occurred on two consecutive days (*ib.* 11. 2 sq.), but makes no mention of lightning; Sidonius probably borrowed this (and not only this) from the grandiose description by Silius (XII. 605-728; cf. XIII. 15-20). Cf. Juv. VII. 163.

<sup>2</sup> See n. on 6. 15.

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who should even surpass him." Tears choked the suppliant's voice, and her grief served for what remained of her petition. On all sides the chiefs of heaven rise in her honour, Mars, Venus, Romulus and the gods that made Rome great; even Saturn's daughter is moved to greater gentleness and forgoes her ancient wrath.

Then answered Jupiter: "Fate, whereby all things—yea, I myself—are governed, might not be violated. Whatever has reached its highest bourne must needs be afflicted, and Fortune hath grudged to aid a power that hath been exalted by *my* bounty. But broken though thou art, be of right good cheer. If Porsenna feared thee more than ever when he raged indignant at the severing of the bridge, if the walls that Brennus captured soon saw his flight, if, last of all, we drove back Hannibal with a wild outburst from earth and sky alike (his camp already stood nigh to thy walls when in front of the Colline tower a thunderbolt rushed down,<sup>1</sup> and Nature feared that there once again, as in Phlegra's<sup>2</sup> combat, Jove was fighting in terror), raise thy drooping eyes, let the dark mist be wiped away and vanish from thy soul. 'Tis a marvel that thou shouldst be conquered, but when thou beginnest to conquer, 'twill be no marvel. And now, that it may be plain to thee how thou mayest rise again, worn out as thou art, hearken and I will declare it in few words.

"I have a land which carries its head high as sprung from Latin blood,<sup>3</sup> a land famed for its men, a land to which Nature, the blessed creator of all things, vouchsafed no peer in days gone by.

<sup>3</sup> This claim of the Arverni is mentioned in Lucan I. 427 sq., a passage recalled by Sidonius in *Epist.* VII. 7. 2.

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pollet ager, primo qui vix proscissus aratro  
 semina tarda sitit vel luxuriante iuvenco  
 arcana exponit piceam pinguedine glaebam.  
 assurrexit huic, coxit quod torridus Auster, 145  
 Niliacum Libycumque solum, collataque semper  
 arida Mygdoniae damnarunt Gargara falces;  
 Apulus et Calaber cessit. spes unica rerum,  
 hanc, Arverne, colens nulli pede cedis in armis,  
 quosvis vincis equo. testis mihi Caesaris esto 150  
 hic nimium Fortuna pavens, cum colle repulsus  
 Gergoviae castris miles vix restitit ipsis.  
 hos ego tam fortes volui, sed cedere Avitum  
 dum tibi, Roma, paro, rutilat cui maxima dudum  
 stemmata complexum germen, palmata cucurrit 155  
 per proavos, gentisque suae te teste, Philagri,  
 patricius resplendet apex. sed portio quanta est  
 haec laudum, laudare patres, quos quippe curules  
 et praefecturas constat debere nepoti?  
 sint alii per quos se postuma iactet origo, 160  
 et priscum titulis numeret genus alter: Avite,

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<sup>1</sup> *Proscindere* is the technical term for the first ploughing. Here no further ploughing is required, so the oxen have a lazy time. [This explanation of *luxuriante* is given by Dr. Sempke, p. 91.]

<sup>2</sup> The Patrician Philagrius to whom Avitus was related is no doubt the man mentioned in *Epist.* II. 3. 1 as a remote ancestor of our poet's old schoolfellow, Magnus Felix (see n. on *Carm.* 9. 1). He cannot be the Philagrius to whom *Epist.* VII. 14 is addressed, but he may be the one mentioned in *Carm.* 24. 93. Modern authorities treat the two (or three) men as one.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* their distinctions came to them because it was ordained that a descendant should be Emperor; it was his destined



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From the city extend rich and fruitful fields; scarce are they cloven with the early ploughing<sup>1</sup> when they thirst for the tardy seeds, and while the ox enjoys luxurious ease they display clods made black by some fatness mysteriously at work. To this soil the tilth of Nile and Libya, baked by the scorching south wind, hath yielded pride of place, and Gargarus, compared with such land, hath always been condemned by Phrygian sickles as withered; the Apulian and the Calabrian have likewise owned defeat. O Arvernian, who dwellest therein, sole hope for the world, thou yieldest to none when thou fightest on foot, and on thy steed thou art a match for any man! Let Fortune, Caesar's attendant goddess, be my witness, who was sore dismayed in this land when his warriors were forced back from Gergovia's hill and scarce halted their flight at their very camp. I ordained that these men should be thus gallant, but all the time I was making ready, O Rome, to present to thee Avitus, whose natal tree, rich in noble branches, hath long shone illustrious, whose forefathers have time after time been adorned with the palm-decked robe, and whose race, as Philagrius bears witness, is irradiated by a Patrician's dignity.<sup>2</sup> But how small a part of his meed of praise is such praise of his forefathers, who manifestly owe their curule rank and prefectures to their descendant!<sup>3</sup> There may be others of whom the later scions of their race will make boast; another may recount the ancient honours of his line; but thou alone, Avitus, dost

greatness that was the real cause of their dignities. Thus it is he who ennobles his ancestors, not his ancestors who ennoble him (*v.* 162).

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nobilitas tu solus avos. libet edere tanti  
gesta viri et primam paucis percurrere vitam.

“ Solverat in partum generosa puerpera casti  
ventris onus; manifesta dedi mox signa futuri 165  
principis ac totam fausto trepidi patris aulam  
implevi augurio. licet idem grandia nati

culparet fata et pueri iam regna videret,  
sed sibi commissum tanto sub pignore cernens  
mundi depositum, ne quid tibi, Roma, periret, 170  
iuvit fortunam studio. lactantia primum  
membra dedit nivibus, glaciemque inrunipere plantis  
iussit et attritas parvum ridere pruinas.

surgentes animi Musis formantur et illo  
quo Cicerone tonas; didicit quoque facta tuorum 175  
ante ducum; didicit pugnas libroque relegit  
quae gereret campo. primus vix coeperat esse  
ex infante puer, rabidam cum forte cruentis  
ricibus atque escas ieiuna fauce parantem  
plus catulis stravit (fuerant nam fragmina prop-  
ter) 180

arrepta de caute lupam, fractusque molari  
dissiluit vertex et saxum vulnere sedit.  
sic meus Alcides, Nemeae dum saltibus errat,  
occurrit monstro vacuus, non robora portans,  
non pharetras; stetit ira fremens atque hoste pro-  
pinquo 185

consuluit solos virtus decepta lacertos.

“ Parva quidem, dicenda tamen: quis promptior isto

167. *sq. dist. ego; vid. Class. Quart. loc. cit. pp. 19 sq.*

185. fremens Buecheler et Wilamowitz: tremens *codd.*  
*plerique.*

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ennoble thy forefathers. Fain am I to relate the deeds of this great man and in few words to run through his earliest years.

"His noble mother had been released from her chaste travail; anon I gave plain tokens of the emperor that was to be, and filled with happy augury the whole palace of the anxious father. He, 'tis true, murmured at his son's high destiny, already seeing his boy a sovereign; nevertheless, discerning in this great pledge the whole world's trust committed to his keeping, he seconded fortune's bounty by his own diligence, lest thou, O Rome, shouldst suffer loss. First he surrendered the suckling's limbs to the snows; he compelled him while a little child to break the ice with his feet and to laugh at the frost as he trod it down. His growing mind was moulded by the Muses and by the Cicero that bestows on thee tones of thunder; he learned also the deeds of thy leaders of former days; he learned of battles and read in the written page what he should perform in the field. Scarce had he changed infancy for boyhood when, seeing a she-wolf ravening with bloody jaws agape as with hungry mouth she sought food, chiefly for her cubs, he snatched a stone (for there were pieces of rock hard by) and laid her low. Shattered by the boulder her head split open, and the stone sank down in the wound. Even so my Hercules, as he roamed the glens of Nemea, faced the monster empty-handed, carrying neither club nor quiver; in raging wrath he took his stand, and with the enemy nigh that brave spirit, taken unawares, looked for aid to naught but his own strong arms.

"Small things, yet worthy to be told are these:—Who was quicker than he to lower to the scent the

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tensa catenati summittere colla Molossi  
 et lustris recubare feras interprete nare  
 discere non visas et in aere quaerere plantas? 190  
 iam si forte suem latratibus improbus Vmber  
 terruit, albentes nigro sub gutture lunas  
 frangere ludus erat colluctantique lacerto  
 vasta per adversas venabula cogere praedas.  
 quam pulchrum, cum forte domum post lustra re-  
     vertens 195

horrore splendet apri virtusque repugnans  
proderet invitum per fortia facta pudorem!  
sic Pandionis castae Tritonidos arvis  
Hippolytus roseo sudum radiabat ab ore,  
sed simul a gemino flagrans cum Cressa furore 200  
transiit adfectu matres et fraude novercas.

“Quid volucrum studium, dat quas natura rapaces  
in vulgus prope cognatum? quis doctior isto  
instituit varias per nubila iungere lites?  
alite vincit aves, celerique per aethera plausu      205  
hoc nulli melius pugnator militat unguis.

“Nec minus haec inter civilia iura secutus  
 eligitur primus, iuvenis, solus, mala fractae  
 alliget ut patriae poscatque informe recidi  
 vectigal. procerum tum forte potentior illic, 210  
 post etiam princeps, Constantius omnia praestat,

<sup>1</sup> Hounds.

<sup>2</sup> "Pandionian" means "Attic," from Pandion, king of Athens, father of Procne and Philomela. "Tritonis" means Pallas Athena; cf. 15. 179. <sup>3</sup> Falconry.

<sup>4</sup> Sidonius makes it clear that Constantius was not yet Emperor. He does not actually say that Constantius was in Gaul at the time, and some have supposed that the embassy went to Ravenna, where Constantius was persuaded to use his influence with Honorius. But the description of Constantius as *potentior illic* seems to imply that he was commanding in

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taut necks of the leashed Molossians,<sup>1</sup> to learn by the guidance of their nostrils that wild beasts he could not see were lurking in the den, and to seek for tracks in the air? Again, if haply the irrepressible Umbrian hound frightened a boar by his barking, it was sport to this lad to smash the white crescents under the monster's black throat and with straining arm to drive a huge spear through the confronting quarry. What a beautiful sight when, returning home from the chase, he would appear all the more resplendent for the boar's bristling hideousness, and his gallantry in its own despite baulked his shrinking modesty by this evidence of brave deeds! Thus in the Pandionian fields of chaste Tritonis<sup>2</sup> was Hippolytus wont to diffuse a sunny radiance from his glowing countenance—though it was then that the Cretan woman, fired by a double frenzy, overpassed a mother's love and a stepmother's guile.

“What of his devotion to the birds that nature creates to prey upon the common throng of creatures almost their kin?<sup>3</sup> Who more skilfully trains them to clash in divers contests amid the clouds? With a bird he vanquishes birds; with a swift whirring through the upper air the warrior claw fights for none more gallantly than for him.

“And amid these sports he followed the law none the less, and, young though he was, he was chosen first and alone to bind up the wounds of his shattered homeland and to make claim for the abolishment of a hideous tax. It chanced that Constantius<sup>4</sup> was chief lord in those parts—he who anon was emperor;

Gaul. It is indeed quite probable that *patriae* (209) refers to Auvergne. We learn from Greg. Tur. II. 9 that the “generals of Honorius” acted with great severity towards the supporters

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indole defixus tanta et miratus in annis  
parvis grande bonum vel in ore precantis ephebi  
verba senis.

“ Ducis hinc pugnas et foedera regum  
pandere, Roma, libet. variis incussa procellis 215  
bellorum regi Getico tua Gallia pacis  
pignora iussa dare est, inter quae nobilis obses  
tu, Theodore, venis; quem pro pietate propinqui  
expetis in media pelliti principis aula  
tutus, Avite, fide. probat hoc iam Theudoris  
altum 220

exemplum officii. res mira et digna relatu,  
quod fueris blandus regi placuisse feroci.  
hinc te paulatim praelibat sensibus imis  
atque nimis vult esse suum; sed spernis amicum  
plus quam Romanum gerere. stupet ille repul-  
sam 225

et plus inde places. rigidum sic, Pyrrhe, videbas  
Fabricium, ingestas animo cum divite fugit  
pauper opes, regem temnens, dum supplice censu  
pignus amicitiae vili mendicat ab auro.

224. nimis *Mohr* : animis.

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of Jovinus in the land of the Arvernians, but Sidonius can scarcely be alluding to such an early date (Jovinus fell in A.D. 413). Constantius was so often and so long in Gaul that we cannot fix the reference with any certainty. If the *vectigal* was a tax levied by the government, only the Emperor could remit it, and we must then suppose that Avitus persuaded Constantius to use his influence with Honorius to that end. It may, however, refer to the requisitions for the pay and provisioning of the army (*annona militaris*).

<sup>1</sup> The Theodorus here mentioned is not otherwise known. It is scarcely likely that he is the man mentioned in *Epist.* III. 10. 1. The Gothic king is Theodoric I (419-451). It is thought that the hostages referred to here were given to him on the occasion of his treaty with the Romans which gave him

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and he granted all that was asked, marvelling at such great talent and astonished at such full-grown virtue in those boyish years, at such elderly speech on the lips of the suppliant youth.

“And now, O Rome, I would fain relate the battles wherein he commanded and the compacts he made with kings. Thy land of Gaul, buffeted by divers tempests of war, was bidden to give to the Gothic king sureties of peace, and among them, a noble hostage, went Theodorus.<sup>1</sup> Avitus, in loving duty to his kin, sought him out in the midst of the skin-clad monarch’s court, and his loyalty won him safety. Theodoric soon looked with favour on this sublime devotion. Marvellous indeed is it and worthy to be recorded that by thy gentle winsomeness, Avitus, thou didst find grace with a fierce king. Little by little he began to know thee in his inmost soul, and he desired exceedingly to have thee as one of his own; but thou didst scorn to act the friend rather than the Roman. The king marvelled at this rebuff, but esteemed thee all the more for it. Even thus did Pyrrhus see Fabricius immovable, when that poor man with rich soul shunned the riches thrust upon him, despising the king in that he made his wealth play the suppliant and begged with paltry gold for a bond of friendship.

sovereignty over Aquitania Secunda and Novempopulana (Intro., p. xvii). This is possible if we accept one of the two dates usually given for that agreement (426 and 430), but not if, with Stein (p. 482), we place it in 439. The giving of hostages does not necessarily imply that the Gothic kingdom was now independent; see Stein, *loc. cit.*, n. 3. See also n. on 495 sqq. Some eminent historians (e.g. Mommsen) have erred seriously through ignorance of the meaning of *expetis* (v. 219). In Sidonius and other late Latin writers this verb often means “seek out,” “visit.”

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"Aetium interea, Scythico quia saepe duello est 230  
 edoctus, sequeris; qui, quamquam celsus in armis,  
 nil sine te gessit, cum plurima tute sine illo.  
 nam post Iuthungos et Norica bella subacto  
 victor Vindelico Belgam, Burgundio quem trux  
 presserat, absolvit iunctus tibi. vincitur illic 235  
 cursu Herulus, Chunus iaculis Francusque natatu,  
 Sauromata clipeo, Salius pede, falce Gelonus,  
 vulnere vel si quis plangit cui flesse feriri est  
 ac ferro perarasse genas vultuque minaci  
 rubra cicatricum vestigia defodisse. 240

"Inlustri iam tum donatur celsus honore.  
 squameus et rutilus etiamnunc livida cristis

232. tute *L. Mueller* : tu.

238. feriri *C<sup>a</sup>F* : perire.

<sup>1</sup> It is important to note that *interea* is often used in poetry to introduce a new action subsequent to, not contemporaneous with, the events just described. For this use in Virgil see D. W. Reinmuth in *Amer. Journ. Phil.* LIV. (1933), pp. 323-339, especially 328-330. "Meanwhile" is often a misleading translation.

<sup>2</sup> The Huns were for years the mainstay of Aëtius' army, and "Scythian warfare" in all probability means war waged by means of Hunnish forces. It is scarcely likely that the meaning is "hostilities with the Goths" (n. on 5. 219), which had apparently gone on with little intermission from about A.D. 425 to 430, and in which Aëtius had played an important part. The details are obscure, though it is certain that Theodoric made at least one unsuccessful attempt to take Arles.

<sup>3</sup> The Iuthungi were subdued by Aëtius in A.D. 430; the contest with the Noricans and the Vindelicians no doubt took place in the course of the same expedition. All modern authorities infer from this passage that Avitus took part in the campaign against the Iuthungi and their neighbours, but Sidonius does not say so.

<sup>4</sup> The Burgundians rose in A.D. 435 and were crushed in



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"Anon<sup>1</sup> thou didst follow Aëtius, because he had learnt many a lesson from the Scythian warfare<sup>2</sup>; and he, glorious in arms though he was, did no deed without thee, though thou didst many without him. For when he had finished with the Iuthungi<sup>3</sup> and the war in Noricum, and had subdued the Vindelicians, thereafter in partnership with thee did he deliver the Belgians, whom the fierce Burgundian had harassed.<sup>4</sup> There the Herulian found in thee his match in fleetness, the Hun in javelin-throwing, the Frank in swimming, the Sauromatian in use of shield, the Salian in marching, the Gelonian in wielding the scimitar; and in bearing of wounds thou didst surpass any mourning barbarian<sup>5</sup> to whom wailing means self-wounding and tearing the cheeks with steel and gouging the red traces of scars on his threatening face.

"Even thus early this hero was glorified by bestowal of the title of Illustrious.<sup>6</sup> Wearing his scale-armour, his face still bearing the mark of the

the following year. It is obvious from this passage that Roman forces were used in the campaign; Bury (l. 249) must be wrong in thinking that the Huns were put in independent charge of it.

<sup>5</sup> The construction is *vel* (= *et*) *vulnere* ("in the matter of a wound") *vincitur* ("is surpassed") *si quis* (= *quisquis*) *plangit*.

<sup>6</sup> The *virī illustres* were the highest class of the senatorial order. As Avitus had not yet held any of the high offices of state which gave a right to the title, it must have been bestowed as an honorary distinction. It is somewhat surprising to find a Gallo-Roman reaching that dignity at such an early stage in his career. It is obvious that in this period he held a high military rank, and the Prefectship which soon followed shows that he was already a marked man. But as the Praetorian Prefect became *inlustris* as a matter of course, one is tempted to suspect that Sidonius has antedated the conferment of the title on Avitus.

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ora gerens vix arma domum sordentia castris  
 rettulerat : nova bella iterum pugnamque sub ipsis  
 iam patriae muris periurus commovet hostis. 245  
 Litorius Scythicos equites tum forte subacto  
 celsus Aremorico Geticum rapiebat in agmen  
 per terras, Arverne, tuas ; qui proxima quaeque  
 discursu, flammis, ferro, feritate, rapinis  
 delebant, pacis fallentes nomen inane. 250  
 huius tum famulum quidam truculentior horum,  
 mox feriente, feris ; ruit ille et tristia fata  
 commendat domino absenti partemque futuram  
 vindictae moriens Stygium spe portat ad amnem.  
 et iam fama viro turres portasque tuenti 255  
 intuitu pavidae plebis perfert scelus actum.  
 excutitur, restat, pallet, rubet, alget et ardet,  
 ac sibimet multas vultum variata per unum  
 ira facit facies, vel, qui mos saepe dolenti, 259  
 plus amat extinctum ; tandem prorumpit et arma,  
 arma fremit, pinguisque etiamnum sanguine fertur  
 lorica, obtusus per barbara vulnera contus  
 atque sub assiduïs dentatus caedibus ensis.  
 includit suras ocreis capitique micantem  
 imponit galeam, fulvus cui crescit in altum 265  
 conus et iratam iaculatur vertice lucem.  
 et iam scandit equum vulsisque a cardine portis  
 emicat ; adsistunt socio Virtusque Dolorque  
 et Pudor : armatas pilo petit impiger alas

245. periurus *Wilamowitz* : periturus.

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<sup>1</sup> *Celsus* may mean "made glorious."

<sup>2</sup> For the conquest of the Aremoricians by Litorius and his subsequent march against the Goths, who were besieging Narbonne, see *Introduct.*, p. xvi. The present passage refers to a lawless body of Hunnish auxiliaries, no doubt detached from the main body of Litorius's forces.

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burnished helmet, scarce had he brought home his stained arms from the field when there came fresh wars and a battle this time under the very walls of his own city, stirred up by a faithless foe. Litorius, elated<sup>1</sup> by the conquest of the Aremoricians,<sup>2</sup> was hurrying his Scythian horsemen against the Gothic host through the land of the Arvernian, and they with raid and fire and sword and barbarity and pillage were destroying all things near them, betraying and making void the name of peace. A servant of Avitus was wounded by one of these, more savage than his fellows, soon to be wounded in turn; the victim fell, and falling commended his woeful fate to the vengeance of his absent master, and as he died he carried with him to the Stygian stream a hopeful foretaste of the revenge that was to come. Now Rumour brought knowledge of the dastard deed to our leader as he kept his ward of towers and gates, regardful of the scared populace. He starts, halts, grows pale, grows red, grows cold and hot; his anger in its changing phases takes many forms in that one countenance, and, as is oft the mourner's way, he loves the lost one more than ever. At length he dashes forward, shouting again and again for his arms, and they bring him his corselet, still clotted with gore, his lance blunted by wounds dealt upon the barbarians, and his sword notched by unceasing slaughter. He cases his legs in greaves and puts upon his head a gleaming helmet, whereon a golden crest-base rises aloft, darting an angry flash from on high. Next he mounts his charger, and tearing the gates from their hinges rushes forth; Valour and Grief and Honour range themselves with their ally; eagerly he charges with his

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pugnando pugnam quaerens, pavidumque per ag-  
men 270

multorum interitu compensat quod latet unus.  
sic Phrygium Emathia victorem cuspide poscens  
Aeacides caeso luctum frenavit amico,  
per mortes tot, Troia, tuas (nam vilia per se  
agmina) contentus ruere strictumque per amplos 275  
exserere gladium populos; natat obruta tellus  
sanguine, dumque hebetat turba grave caedua telum  
absens in cuncto sibi vulnere iam cadit Hector.  
proditus ut tandem tanti qui causa tumultus,  
inquit Avitus: 'Age, Scythica nutrite sub Arcto,  
qui furis et caeso tantum qui fidis inermi, 281  
congregere armato. multum tibi praestitit ira  
iam mea: concessi pugnam iubeoque resistas;  
certantem mactasse iuvat.' sic fatur et aequor  
prosilit in medium, nec non ferus advenit hostis. 285  
ut primum pectus vel comminus ora tulere,  
hic ira tremit, ille metu. iam cetera turba  
diversis trepidat votis variosque per ictus  
pendet ab eventu. sed postquam prima, secunda  
tertiaque acta rota est, venit ecce et celsa cruen-  
tum 290

perforat hasta virum, post et confinia dorsi  
cedit transfosso ruptus bis pectore thorax,  
et dum per duplicem sanguis singultat hiatum  
dividua ancipitem carpserunt vulnera vitam.

273-5. *dist. ego.*

274. *nam ego dubitanter: iam.*

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* fighting his way through the ranks in order to meet the hiding murderer.

<sup>2</sup> Achilles after the slaying of Patroclus by Hector.

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pike the armed ranks, seeking a fight by fighting,<sup>1</sup> and amid the fear-stricken throng he makes the death of many pay for the absence of the one that lurks concealed. Even so did the scion of Aeacus,<sup>2</sup> ranging with his spear in search of the Phrygian victor, hold back his mourning when his friend was slain, content to rush in a tide of death-dealing among Troy's host (for in themselves he counted those hordes as naught), and to wield the drawn sword through multitudinous throngs; the ground was submerged and swam in blood, and as the falling ranks blunted his heavy weapon he saw already in every wound he dealt the absent Hector fall. When at last he who was the cause of that great havoc stood revealed, then said Avitus: 'Ho! thou fellow reared 'neath the Scythian Bear, who ragest like a madman and hast such boldness from slaying the unarmed, come, meet one who is armed! Already my wrath has allowed thee a great boon; I have granted thee a fight, and I bid thee stand thy ground; I choose to slaughter a resisting foe.' Thus he spake, and bounded forth into the midst of the plain; and the barbarous foe likewise came. When first they approached, breast to breast and face to face, the one shook with anger, the other with fear. Now the general throng stands in sore suspense, with prayers on this side or on that, and as blow follows blow they hang on the issue. But when the first bout, the second, the third have been fought, lo! the upraised spear comes and pierces the man of blood; his breast was transfixed and his corselet twice split, giving way even where it covered the back; and as the blood came throbbing through the two gaps the separate wounds took away the life that each of them might claim.

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"Haec post gesta viri (temet, Styx livida, testor)  
 intemerata mihi praefectus iura regebat; 296  
 et caput hoc sibimet solitis defessa ruinis  
 Gallia suscipiens Getica pallescit ab ira.  
 nil prece, nil pretio, nil milite fractus agebat  
 Aetius; capto terrarum damna patebant 300  
 Litorio; in Rhodanum proprios producere fines  
 Theodoridae fixum, nec erat pugnare necesse,  
 sed migrare Getis. rabidam trux asperat iram  
 victor; quod sensit Scythicum pro moenibus hostem,  
 imputat; et nil est gravius, si forsitan umquam 305  
 vincere contingat, trepido. postquam undique nul-  
 lum

praesidium ducibusque tuis nil, Roma, relictum est,  
 foedus, Avite, novas; saevum tua pagina regem  
 lecta domat; iussisse sat est te, quod rogat orbis.  
 credent hoc umquam gentes populique futuri? 310  
 littera Romani cassat quod, barbare, vincis.  
 iura igitur rexit; namque hoc quoque par fuit, ut tum  
 assertor fieret legum qui nunc erit auctor,  
 ne dandus populis princeps, caput, induperator,  
 Caesar et Augustus solum fera proelia nosset. 315

"Iam praefecturae perfunctus culmine tandem  
 se dederat ruri (numquam tamen otia, numquam  
 desidia imbellis, studiumque et cura quieto  
 armorum semper): subito cum rupta tumultu

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<sup>1</sup> The prefecture of Avitus began in A.D. 439, the year in which Litorius was defeated near Toulouse (Introd., pp. xvi f., and it seems to have lasted for some years. Litorius, though finally defeated, inflicted heavy losses on the Goths, and it was perhaps this fact, as much as the diplomacy of Avitus, that persuaded the king to come to terms with the Romans.

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“ After these valiant deeds (I call even thee, dark Styx, to witness) he was my prefect,<sup>1</sup> administering the laws without corruption. Gaul when she received him as her head was worn out with the familiar devastation and pale with affright at the Gothic wrath. Aëtius was broken; naught could he do by prayer or bribe or with his soldiers; and when Litorius was captured the destitution of the land stood revealed. Theodoric was resolved to advance his own boundaries to the Rhone, and the Goths needed not to fight, but only to migrate. The fierce victor whetted his raging wrath; he counted it a sin against him that he had known the presence of the Scythian foe<sup>2</sup> before his walls, and naught is more grievous than a frightened man if he ever chance to be victorious. When there was no support anywhere and no resource, O Rome, was left to thy leaders, Avitus renewed the treaty; the reading of his scroll subdued the king; Avitus had but to order that which the world begged for. Will future races and peoples ever believe this?—a Roman’s letter annulled a barbarian’s conquests. So he administered the laws; for this also was fitting, that at that time he should become the champion of the laws who will now be their maker, lest he who was to be given to the peoples as prince, head, emperor, Caesar, and Augustus should have no knowledge save of savage battles.

“ Now he had discharged the prefect’s majestic office, and he had devoted himself to country life (though never with him was there idleness or unwarlike sloth, but even in those peaceful days arms were ever his study and his care)—when suddenly the bar-

<sup>2</sup> The Huns under Litorius.

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barbaries totas in te transfuderat Arctos, 320  
 Gallia. pugnacem Rugum comitante Gelono  
 Gepida trux sequitur; Scirum Burgundio cogit;  
 Chunus, Bellonotus, Neurus, Bastarna, Toringus,  
 Bructerus, ulvosa vel quem Nicer alluit unda  
 prorumpit Francus; cecidit cito secta bipenni 325  
 Hercynia in lintres et Rhenum texuit alno;  
 et iam terrificis diffuderat Attila turmis  
 in campos se, Belga, tuos. vix liquerat Alpes  
 Aetius, tenue et rarum sine milite ducens  
 robur in auxiliis, Geticum male credulus agmen 330  
 incassum propriis praesumens adfore castris.  
 nuntius at postquam ductorem perculit, Hunos  
 iam prope contemptum propriis in sedibus hostem  
 exspectare Getas, versat vagus omnia secum  
 consilia et mentem curarum fluctibus urget. 335  
 tandem nutanti sedit sententia celsum  
 exorare virum, collectisque omnibus una  
 principibus coram supplex sic talibus infit:  
 'orbis, Avite, salus, cui non nova gloria nunc est  
 quod rogat Aetius, voluisti, et non nocet hostis; 340  
 vis: prodest. inclusa tenes tot milia nutu,  
 et populis Geticis sola est tua gratia limes;  
 infensi semper nobis pacem tibi praestant.  
 victrices, i, prome aquilas; fac, optime, Chunos,

336. nutanti *M*: cunctanti.

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<sup>1</sup> The incursion of Attila and his hordes gathered from many nations, A.D. 451. The support of the Visigoths was vital to the Romans. Avitus certainly made a good ambassador, but the probability is that Theodoric acted largely from self-interest, already detecting Attila's intention to push his conquests beyond the Loire.

<sup>2</sup> The Bellonoti (Balloniti, or perhaps Ballonoti, in Val. Flacc. VI. 161) were a Sarmatian people. For the other peoples here mentioned, see Hodgkin II. 106 ff.



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barian world, rent by a mighty upheaval, poured the whole north into Gaul.<sup>1</sup> After the warlike Rugian comes the fierce Gepid, with the Gelonian close by; the Burgundian urges on the Scirian; forward rush the Hun, the Bellonotian,<sup>2</sup> the Neurian, the Bastarnian, the Thuringian, the Bructeran, and the Frank, he whose land is washed by the sedgy waters of Nicer.<sup>3</sup> Straightway falls the Hercynian forest, hewn to make boats, and overlays the Rhine with a network of its timber; and now Attila with his fearsome squadrons has spread himself in raids upon the plains of the Belgian. Aëtius had scarce left the Alps, leading a thin, meagre force of auxiliaries without legionaries, vainly with ill-starred confidence expecting that the Gothic host would join his camp. But tidings came that struck the leader with dismay; in their own land were the Goths awaiting the Huns, a foe they now almost despised. Perplexed, he turned over every plan, and his mind was beset with surging cares. At length in his wavering heart was formed the fixed resolve to make appeal to a man of high estate; and before an assemblage of all the nobles he thus began to plead: 'Avitus, saviour of the world, to whom it is no new glory to be besought by Aëtius, thou didst wish it, and the enemy no longer does harm;<sup>4</sup> thou wishest it, and he does good. All those thousands thou dost keep within bounds by thy nod; thine influence alone is a barrier-wall to the Gothic peoples; ever hostile to us, they grant peace to thee. Go, display the victorious eagles;<sup>5</sup> bring it to pass, O noble hero, that the Huns,

<sup>3</sup> The Neckar.

<sup>4</sup> See *vv.* 306-311.

<sup>5</sup> *i.e.* in order that the Gothic soldiers may rally to them.

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quorum forte prior fuga nos concusserat olim,      345  
 bis victos prodesse mihi.' sic fatur, et ille  
 pollicitus votum fecit spem. protinus inde  
 avolat et famulas in proelia concitat iras.  
 ibant pellitae post classica Romula turmae,  
 ad nomen currente Geta; timet aere vocari      350  
 dirutus, opprobrium, non damnum barbarus horrens.  
 hos ad bella trahit iam tum spes orbis Avitus,  
 vel iam privatus vel adhuc. sic cinnama busto  
 collis Erythraei portans Phoebeius ales  
 concitat omne avium vulgus; famulantia currunt      355  
 agmina, et angustus pennas non explicat aer.

"Iam prope fata tui bis senas vulturis alas  
 complebant (scis namque tuos, scis, Roma, labores):  
 Aetium Placidus mactavit semivir amens;  
 vixque tuo impositum capiti diadema, Petroni:      360  
 ilico barbaries, nec non sibi capta videri  
 Roma Getis tellusque suo cessura furori;  
 raptores ceu forte lupi, quis nare sagaci  
 monstrat odor pinguem clausis ab ovilibus auram,  
 irritant acuuntque famem portantque rapinae      36

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* by serving in the Roman ranks: cf. *prodest*, v. 341. The meaning is that the Huns serving under Litorius had by their flight before the Goths caused a Roman disaster (A.D. 339): now a second defeat of the Huns will put them once more at the service of Rome.

<sup>2</sup> *Aere dirutus* (Cic. *Verr.* II. 5. 33, etc.) was applied to a soldier whose pay was stopped as a punishment.

<sup>3</sup> A play on the two meanings of *privatus*: Avitus to now *privatus* ("out of office"; his Prefecture was over, or still *privatus* (*i.e.* a subject: he was soon to be self-Emperor). For the latter meaning of *privatus* cf. below.

<sup>4</sup> See nn. on 2. 417 and (for *Eryth.*) 2. 447.

<sup>5</sup> See v. 55 n.

<sup>6</sup> See 5. 305 sqq. n. Placidus was one of the na

Val.  
 other

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whose flight aforetime shook us, shall by a second defeat be made to do me service.'<sup>1</sup> Thus he spake, and Avitus consenting changed his prayer into hope. Straightway he flies thence and rouses up the Gothic fury that was his willing slave. Rushing to enroll their names, the skin-clad warriors began to march behind the Roman trumpets; those barbarians feared the name of 'pay-docked soldiers,'<sup>2</sup> dreading the disgrace, not the loss. These men Avitus swept off to war, Avitus even thus early the world's hope, though now (or still) a plain citizen.<sup>3</sup> Even so the bird of Phoebus, when bearing the cinnamon to his pyre on the Erythraean hill,<sup>4</sup> rouses all the common multitude of birds; the obedient throng hies to him, and the air is too narrow to give their wings free play.

"Now destiny was well-nigh bringing to fulfilment the sign of the twelve flying vultures<sup>5</sup> (Thou knowest, O Rome, thou knowest all thy troubles). Placidus,<sup>6</sup> the mad eunuch, slaughtered Aëtius. Scarce was the diadem set on the head of Petronius when all at once came a barbarian flood, and the Goths had visions of Rome captured by them and of the whole earth ready to surrender to their frenzy; as ravening wolves, whose keen scent has caught a whiff of fatlings wafted from a fenced sheepcote, goad and sharpen their hunger, and carry in their

Valentinian III. That feeble emperor is perhaps intentionally described in terms strictly applicable to the chamberlain Heraclius, who helped him in the assassination of Aëtius. It was Petronius Maximus who appointed Avitus to the military command of Gaul, dignifying that office, apparently for the first time, with the title *magister peditum equitumque* (or *mag. utriusque militiae*; see v. 377 and n. on 5. 553). Another view is that Avitus was made *mag. mil. praesentalis*.

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in vultu speciem, patulo ieiunia rictu  
 fallentes; iam iamque tener spe frangitur agnus  
 atque absens avido crepitat iam praeda palato.  
 quin et Aremoricus piratam Saxona tractus  
 sperabat, cui pelle salum sulcare Britannum 370  
 ludus et assuto glaucum mare findere lembo.  
 Francus Germanum primum Belgamque secundum  
 sternebat, Rhenumque, ferox Alamanne, bibebas  
 Romani ripis et utroque superbus in agro  
 vel civis vel victor eras. sed perdita cernens 375  
 terrarum spatia princeps iam Maximus, unum  
 quod fuit in rebus, peditumque equitumque magis-  
 trum  
 te sibi, Avite, legit. collati rumor honoris  
 invenit agricolam, flexi dum forte ligonis  
 exercet dentes vel pando pronus aratro 380  
 vertit inexcortam per pingua iugera glaebam.  
 sic quondam ad patriae res fractas pauper arator,  
 Cincinnate, venis veterem cum te induit uxor  
 ante boves trabeam dictatoremque salignae  
 excepere fores atque ad sua tecta ferentem 385  
 quod non persevit, turpique e fasce gravata  
 vile triumphalis portavit purpura semen.  
 "Vt primum ingesti pondus suscepit honoris,  
 legas qui veniam poscant, Alamanne, furori,  
 Saxonis incursus cessat, Chattumque palustri 390  
 alligat Albis aqua; vixque hoc ter menstrua totum

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<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* the inhabitants of Germania Prima (capital Moguntiacum, Mainz) and Belgica Secunda (capital Durocortorum Remorum, Rheims).

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eyes a vision of their spoil, beguiling their famishment with jaws opened wide; every moment their expectant hope sees a young lamb mangled, and the prey beyond their reach is already crunched in their greedy mouths. The Aremorian region too expected the Saxon pirate, who deems it but sport to furrow the British waters with hides, cleaving the blue sea in a stitched boat. The Frank began to lay low the First German and the Second Belgian<sup>1</sup>; the bold Alaman was drinking the Rhine from the Roman bank and proudly lording it on both sides, a citizen<sup>2</sup> or a conqueror. But Maximus, now emperor, seeing such loss of widespread lands, took the sole availing course in such distress and chose for himself Avitus as Master of Horse and Foot. The tidings of the rank bestowed found him farming, plying the bent mattock's tooth or stooping over the curved plough as he turned up the unsunned clods in his fertile acres. Thus aforetime Cincinnatus came, a poor ploughman, to heal his country's broken fortunes, when his wife put the old robe upon him, standing before the oxen, and his doors of willow-wood now opened for a dictator, who bore back to his dwelling what he had not sowed, and thus the triumphal purple, weighted with a mean load, carried common seed.

"No sooner had he taken up the burden of the office thrust upon him than the Alaman sent envoys to crave pardon for their frenzy, the Saxon's raiding abated and the marshy water of Albis confined the Chattian; and scarce had the moon viewed all this

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* an Alamannian tribesman, a member of the Alamannian community on the right bank of the Rhine; on the other bank he is an alien invader. *Civis* does not here mean "Roman citizen."

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luna videt, iamque ad populos ac rura feroci  
 tenta Getae pertendit iter, qua pulsus ab aestu  
 Oceanus refluxum spargit per culta Garunnam;  
 in flumen currente mari transcendit amarus 395  
 blanda fluenta latex, fluviiq; impacta per alveum  
 salsa peregrinum sibi navigat unda profundum.  
 hic iam disposito laxantes frena duello  
 Vesorum proceres raptim suspendit ab ira  
 rumor, succinctum referens diplomate Avitum 400  
 iam Geticas intrare domos positaque parumper  
 mole magisterii legati iura subisse.

"Obstupuere duces pariter Scythicusque senatus  
 et timuere, suam pacem ne forte negaret.  
 sic rutilus Phaetonta levem cum carperet axis 405  
 iam pallente die flagrantique excita mundo  
 pax elementorum fureret vel sicca propinquus  
 saeviret per stagna vapor limusque sitiret  
 pulvereo ponti fundo, tunc unica Phoebi  
 insuetum clemens exstinxit flamma calorem. 410

"Hic aliquis tum forte Getes, dum falce recocta  
 icibus informat saxoque cacuminat ense,  
 iam promptus caluisse tubis, iam iamque frequenti  
 caede sepulturus terram non hoste sepulto,  
 claruit ut primum nomen venientis Aviti, 415  
 exclamat: 'periit bellum, date rursus aratra.

400. succinctum *ego*: succineto.

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<sup>1</sup> Sidonius likes to dwell on the tidal bores of the Garonne: cf. 22. 18 sq.; *ib.* 105 sqq.; *Epist.* VIII. 12. 5.

<sup>2</sup> *Scyth.*, i.e. Gothic (5. 219 n.).

<sup>3</sup> The lightness of Phaethon helped to throw the chariot-horses into confusion: Ovid, *Met.* II. 161 sq.

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throughout three monthly courses, when he set himself on the march to the peoples and lands possessed by the bold Goth, where the ocean driven onwards by the tide spreads the retreating Garonne over the fields—for as the sea invades the river the salt water climbs over the sweet flow, and the briny flood, driven along the river-bed, rides on deeps that are strange to it.<sup>1</sup> Here the chiefs of the Visigoths were letting loose the war they had planned, when suddenly their fury was checked by tidings that Avitus, armed with an imperial writ, was already entering the home of the Goths and, having laid aside for a little the pomp of the Master's office, had taken upon himself the authority of an ambassador.

“The Scythian<sup>2</sup> leaders and senate alike were thunderstruck, and feared lest he should deny their peaceful intent. Even thus, when the flaming chariot was pulling the light<sup>3</sup> Phaethon this way and that and the daylight was already dim, when the harmony of the elements was stirred to fury by a blazing world, when the hot breath came close and ranged madly over the drying pools, and the parched mud thirsted on the dusty bottom of the sea, then Phoebus' gentle fire alone quenched that unwonted heat.

“Hereupon, as it chanced, one of the Goths, who had re-forged his pruning-hook and was shaping a sword with blows on the anvil and sharpening it with a stone, a man already prepared to rouse himself to fury at the sound of the trumpet and looking at any moment with manifold slaughter to bury the ground under unburied foes, cried out, as soon as the name of the approaching Avitus was clearly proclaimed: ‘War is no more! Give me the plough

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otia si replico priscae bene nota quietis,  
 non semel iste mihi ferrum tulit. o pudor! o di!  
 tantum posse fidem! quid foedera lenta minaris,  
 in damnum mihi fide meum? compendia pacis 420  
 et praestare iubes nos et debere. quis umquam  
 crederet? en Getici reges, parere volentes,  
 inferius regnasse putant! nec dicere saltim  
 desidiaie obtentu possum te proelia nolle:  
 pacem fortis amas. iam partes sternit Avitus; 425  
 insuper et Geticas praemissus continet iras  
 Messianus; adhuc mandasti, et ponimus arma.  
 quid restat quod posse velis? quod non sumus hostes  
 parva reor; prisco tu si mihi notus in actu es,  
 auxiliaris ero: vel sic pugnare licebit.' 430

"Haec secum rigido Vesus dum corde volutat,  
 ventum in conspectum fuerat. rex atque magister  
 propter constiterant; hic vultu erectus, at ille  
 laetitia erubuit veniamque rubore poposcit.  
 post hinc germano regis, hinc rege retento 435  
 Palladium implicitis manibus subiere Tolosam.  
 haud secus insertis ad pulvinaria palmis  
 Romulus et Tatiús foedus iecere, parentum  
 cum ferro et rabidis cognato in Marte maritis  
 Hersilia inseruit Pallantis colle Sabinas. 440

<sup>1</sup> Messianus was one of Avitus's trusted officers, who afterwards went with him to Rome and received the title of patrician. He accompanied his master in his flight and was killed at Placentia, A.D. 456.

<sup>2</sup> The king is Theodoric II, the brother Friedrich (Fridericus). These two had in A.D. 453 murdered their brother Thorismund, who had succeeded Theodoric I. There is an interesting description of Theodoric II in *Epist* I. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *Palladium*. An epithet already applied by Martial and Ausonius to Toulouse as a home of the liberal arts.



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again! If I recall the familiar old days of idle peace, he hath time and again taken the sword from me. O shame! O ye gods above! To think that faithful friendship should have such power! Why dost thou threaten me with tedious treaties, dealing loyally with me to my loss? Thou dost bid us both give to thee and owe to thee the advantages of peace. Who could have believed it? Lo! the Gothic kings are fain to yield obedience, and deem their royal power of less account than that. Nor can I even say that thou dost shun battle to screen a craven spirit; brave art thou, albeit thou lovest peace. Avitus is already ending the strife of parties, and Messianus<sup>1</sup> too, sent on before, is curbing the Gothic wrath. Thou hast as yet but sent thine orders. Avitus, and we are laying down our arms. What further power canst thou desire? I count it a small thing that we are not thine enemies; nay, if I have gained a right knowledge of thee in action aforetime, thine auxiliary will I be; thus at least I shall have leave to fight.

“While the Visigoth revolved these thoughts in his stern heart they had come into view. The king and the Master took their stand near together, the Master with confident look, while the other blushed with joy and by his blush sued for clemency. Then Avitus kept on one side of him the king,<sup>2</sup> on the other side the king’s brother, and with joined hands they entered Tolosa, city of Pallas.<sup>3</sup> Even thus with hand clasped in hand beside the couches of the gods did Romulus and Tatius establish their treaty, when Hersilia on the hill of Pallas thrust the Sabine women between their father’s weapons and the husbands who were furiously battling against their kindred.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

" Interea incautam furtivis Vandalus armis  
 te capit, infidoque tibi Burgundio ductu  
 extorquet trepidas mactandi principis iras.  
 heu facinus! in bella iterum quartosque labores  
 perfida Elissee crudescunt classica Byrsae. 445  
 nutritis quod, fata, malum? conscenderat arces  
 Euandri Massyla phalanx montesque Quirini  
 Marmarici pressere pedes rursusque revexit  
 quae captiva dedit quondam stipendia Barce.  
 exsilium patrum, plebis mala, principe caeso 450  
 captivum imperium ad Geticas rumor tulit aures.  
 luce nova veterum coetus de more Getarum  
 contrahitur; stat prisca annis viridisque senectus  
 consiliis; squalent vestes ac sordida macro  
 lintea pinguescunt tergo, nec tangere possunt 455  
 altatae suram pelles, ac poplite nudo  
 peronem pauper nodus suspendit equinum.  
 " Postquam in consilium seniorum venit honora  
 pauperies pacisque simul rex verba poposcit,  
 dux ait: ' optassem patriis securus in arvis 460  
 emeritam, fateor, semper fovisse quietem,  
 ex quo militiae post munia trina superbum

<sup>1</sup> It must not be forgotten that Jupiter is still addressing Rome.

<sup>2</sup> Accounts of the murder of Petronius Maximus differ a great deal, and we have no means of knowing what Sidonius means by *Burgundio*.

<sup>3</sup> 2. 351 n.

<sup>4</sup> Avitus had gone to Toulouse to negotiate on behalf of Petronius Maximus. These negotiations were apparently not completed when news of the Emperor's death on May 31 arrived. Theodoric formed the plan of making Avitus Emperor and summoned his council. Avitus is represented as appearing before the council in ignorance of the scheme on

## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

“ Meanwhile, when thou <sup>1</sup> wert off thy guard, the Vandal with stealthy arms captured thee, and the Burgundian with his traitorous leadership extorted from thee the panic-fury that led to an emperor’s slaughter.<sup>2</sup> Alas for the deed! Once more for war and for a fourth season of trouble the faithless war-trumpets of Dido’s Byrsa <sup>3</sup> blare forth. O Destiny, what ill hast thou been fostering? A Massylian band had climbed Evander’s height, Marmarican feet trampled Quirinus’ hills, and Barce carried back the tribute that once she paid in her days of captivity. Rumour brought to Gothic ears the exile of the senate, the ills of the common folk, the Emperor’s murder and the captivity of the Empire. At dawn of day a meeting of Gothic elders was assembled in the wonted fashion <sup>4</sup>; there stand they, old in years but hale in counsel; their dress is unkempt, tarnished and greasy are the linen garments on their lean backs; their coats of skin are drawn up high and cannot reach the calf; their knees are bare and their boots of horse-hide are held up by a common knot.

“ When this company of elders, venerable for all their poverty, entered the council, and the king called for the proposals of peace, the general said: ‘ I confess that I would fain have cherished evermore in tranquillity among my paternal acres the rest that my toil has earned, now that after holding three commands <sup>5</sup> I have reached a fourth glory and held the foot and merely making a strong plea for peace between the two nations.

<sup>5</sup> By *militiae munia* Sidonius certainly means military commands, not posts in the civil service. We learn from v. 315 that Avitus had held no civil office before he became *praefectus praetorio*.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

praefecturae apicem quarto iam culmine rexi.  
 sed dum me nostri princeps modo Maximus orbis  
 ignarum, absentem procerum per mille repulsas 465  
 ad lituos post iura vocat voluitque sonoris  
 praeconem mutare tubis, promptissimus istud  
 arripui officium, vos quo legatus adirem.  
 foedera prisca precor, quae nunc meus ille teneret,  
 iussissem si forte, senex cui semper Avitum 470  
 sectari crevisse fuit. tractare solebam  
 res Geticas olim; scis te nescisse frequenter  
 quae suasi nisi facta. tamen fortuna priorem  
 abripuit genium; periit quodcumque merebar  
 cum genitore tuo. Narbonem tabe solutum 475  
 ambierat (tu parvus eras); trepidantia cingens  
 milia in infames iam iamque coegerat escas;  
 iam tristis propriae credebat defore praedae,  
 si clausus fortasse perit, cum nostra probavit  
 consilia et refugo laxavit moenia bello. 480  
 teque ipsum (sunt ecce senes) hoc pectore fultum  
 hae flentem tenuere manus, si forsitan altrix  
 te mihi, cum nolles, lactandum tolleret. ecce  
 advenio et prisci repeto modo pignus amoris.  
 si tibi nulla fides, nulla est reverentia patris, 485  
 i durus pacemque nega.'

" Prorumpit ab omni

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<sup>1</sup> Theodoric I.

<sup>2</sup> See Introd., p. xvi. The result of the siege of Narbonne is described in 23. 59 sqq. The relief of the town is elsewhere attributed to Litorius. We may assume that the arrival of Litorius (and possibly a severe engagement with his troops) inclined Theodoric to make a temporary peace, negotiated by Avitus. The Goths withdrew, but soon renewed hostilities, which ended with the bloody battle of Toulouse. It is most probable that Avitus joined the army of Litorius on its way to Narbonne and held a high command in it.

## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

supreme honour of the Prefecture. But as Maximus, late sovereign of our western world, after a thousand refusals from our chiefest men, summoned me, all unsuspecting and far away, to serve amid the clarions of war after controlling the laws, and ordained that I should now hear the blaring trumpets instead of the court-usher's voice, then did I right readily embrace the duty, that I might go as ambassador to you. I crave of you the old treaty, which even now that aged man, my one-time friend,<sup>1</sup> for whom to follow Avitus was always to grow greater, would be maintaining if only I had bidden him. In former days I was wont to guide the doings of the Goths; thou knowest that my counsel was often acted on before thou wert aware of it. But fate hath taken away from me my guardian-spirit of former days, and all my services have faded from sight along with thy father. He had surrounded Narbo,<sup>2</sup> and it was enfeebled with wasting famine (thou wert then a child): hemming in those panic-stricken thousands he had all but driven them to eat of loathsome things, and already he had begun gloomily to think that some of his due spoil would be lost if haply the besieged perished within, when he gave ear to my advice, and withdrawing his arms relieved the walls from war. And thee thyself (See! there are old men to witness it), these hands of mine have held weeping close to this breast, when perchance thy nurse was taking thee away from me to give thee suck and thou wert loth to go. Behold! I come and seek now a fresh pledge of our old love. If thou hast no loyalty, no reverence for thy father, then go thy harsh way and refuse peace.'

"From all the council arose murmurs and shout-

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murmur concilio fremitusque, et proelia damnans  
 seditiosa ciet concordem turba tumultum.  
 tum rex effatur: 'dudum, dux inclite, culpo  
 poscere te pacem nostram, cum cogere possis 490  
 servitium, trahere ac populos in bella sequaces.  
 ne, quaeso, invidiam patrio mihi nomine inuras:  
 quid mereor, si nulla iubes? suadere sub illo  
 quod poteras, modo velle sat est, solumque moratur,  
 quod cupias, nescisse Getas. mihi Romula dudum  
 per te iura placent, parvumque ediscere iussit 496  
 ad tua verba pater docili quo prisca Maronis  
 carmine molliret Scythicos mihi pagina mores;  
 iam pacem tum velle doces. sed percipe quae sit  
 condicio obsequii: forsán rata pacta probabis. 500  
 testor, Roma, tuum nobis venerabile nomen  
 et socium de Marte genus (vel quidquid ab aevo,  
 nil te mundus habet melius, nil ipsa senatu),  
 me pacem servare tibi vel velle abolere  
 quae noster peccavit avus, quem fuscát id unum, 505  
 quod te, Roma, capit; sed di si vota secundant,  
 excidii veteris crimen purgare valebit  
 ultio praesentis, si tu, dux inclite, solum

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<sup>1</sup> The following lines refer to the episode described in *vv.* 215–226. That passage seems to imply that the visit to Theodorus was the first occasion on which Avitus met Theodoric I. The most probable date for the visit is A.D. 430 or a little later. *Vv.* 233–235 do not necessarily rule out A.D. 430 (see n.). Between that year and 435, when Avitus took part in the war against the Burgundians, the Goths seem to have been comparatively quiet, and Avitus may have remained at the Gothic court for a considerable time, acting as tutor to the young prince. There is no need to assume any further sojourn among the Goths, apart from the official missions described in this poem. As for *vv.* 481–483, they are probably an empty rhetorical flourish.

## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

ing; the insurgent crowd, condemning war, raised a friendly uproar. Then out spake the king: 'O leader renowned, I have long been blaming thee for begging peace from us when thou hast power to enforce bondage and draw willing peoples to war in thy train. I beseech thee, brand me not with obloquy by bringing up my father's name. What blame can be mine if thou give me no orders? What thou mightest have advised in his day thou needst now but desire; the only hindrance is that the Goths have not learnt what thou wouldst have.

<sup>1</sup> Thanks to thee the laws of Rome have long been pleasing to me; when I was a child my father bade me learn lines by heart at thine instruction, that those strains of Virgil's ancient page, taught to thy willing pupil, might soften my Scythian ways; even then thou didst teach me to desire peace. But hear now the terms of my obedience, and perhaps thou wilt be pleased to sanction a compact. I swear, O Rome, by thy name, revered by me, and by our common descent from Mars <sup>2</sup> (for among all things that have been since the beginning of time the world hath naught greater than thee and thou hast naught greater than the senate): I desire to keep the peace with thee and to wipe out the transgressions of my grandsire,<sup>3</sup> whose one blot is that he captured thee; but if the gods bless my prayer, the guilt of that ancient destruction can be atoned for by avenging that of to-day <sup>4</sup>—if only thou, renowned leader,

<sup>2</sup> Jord. *Get.* 5 states that Mars is said to have dwelt for a long time among the Goths. With this tradition he associates Verg. *Aen.* III. 35, where Mars is said to be a tutelary deity of the *Getica arva*.

<sup>3</sup> Alaric, who captured Rome, A.D. 410.

<sup>4</sup> *i.e.* the capture by Geiseric.

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Augusti subeas nomen. quid lumina flectis?  
 invitum plus esse decet. non cogimus istud, 510  
 sed contestamur: Romae sum te duce amicus,  
 principe te miles. regnum non praecipis ulli,  
 nec quisquam Latias Augustus possidet arces;  
 qua vacat, aula tua est. testor, non sufficit istud,  
 ne noceam; atque tuo hoc utinam diademate fiat, 515  
 ut prosim! suadere meum est; nam Gallia si te  
 compulerit, quae iure potest, tibi pareat orbis,  
 ne pereat.' dixit pariterque in verba petita  
 dat sanctam cum fratre fidem. discedis, Avite,  
 maestus, qui Gallos scires non posse latere 520  
 quod possint servire Getae te principe. namque  
 civibus ut patuit trepidis te foedera ferre,  
 occurrunt alacres ignaroque ante tribunal  
 sternunt; utque satis sibimet numerosa coisse  
 nobilitas visa est, quam saxa nivalia Cotti 525  
 despectant, variis nec non quam partibus ambit  
 Tyrrheni Rhenique liquor, vel longa Pyrenei  
 quam iuga ab Hispano seclusam iure coercent,  
 aggreditur nimio curarum pondere tristem  
 gaudens turba virum. procerum tuum maximus  
 unus, 530  
 dignus qui patriae personam sumeret, inquit:  
 'quam nos per varios dudum fortuna labores

521. quod *Mohr*: quid.



## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

shouldst take upon thee the name of Augustus. Why dost thou avert thine eyes? Thine unwillingness becomes thee all the more. We do not force this on thee, but we adjure thee: with thee as leader I am a friend of Rome, with thee as Emperor I am her soldier. Thou art not stealing the sovereignty from any man; no Augustus holds the Latian hills, a palace without a master is thine. I protest, it is not enough that I do thee no harm; I would that thine imperial diadem might bring me the means to do thee service. My part is but to urge thee; but if Gaul should compel thee, as she has the right to do, the world would cherish thy sway, lest it perish.' He spake, and straightway with his brother gave his solemn pledge in the form of words desired. But thou, Avitus, didst depart in sadness, knowing it could not be hidden from the Gauls that the Goths could be at their service if thou wert Emperor. Yea, when it was revealed to the anxious citizens that thou wert carrying back with thee a treaty, they eagerly rushed to meet thee, and without thy knowing it they spread a tribunal for thee beforehand, and when the crowds of nobles deemed they were assembled in sufficient multitude—those on whom the snowy rocks of the Cottian Alps look down, those around whom in their sundry regions wind the waters of the Tuscan sea or the Rhine, and those whom the long ridges of the Pyrenees shut off from Spanish rule—then did that throng approach with joy that man oppressed by a crushing load of care. Thereupon the oldest of all those lords, one right worthy to be his country's spokesman, thus began: 'Of the cruel fortune that hath long harassed us with divers hardships under a boy-

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principe sub puero laceris terat aspera rebus,  
 fors longum, dux magne, queri, cum quippe dolentum  
 maxima pars fueris, patriae dum vulnera lugens 535  
 sollicitudinibus vehementibus exagitaris.

has nobis inter clades ac funera mundi  
 mors vixisse fuit. sed dum per verba parentum  
 ignavas colimus leges sanctumque putamus  
 rem veterem per damna sequi, portavimus um-  
 bram 540

imperii, generis contenti ferre vetusti  
 et vitia ac solitam vestiri murice gentem  
 more magis quam iure pati. promptissima nuper  
 fulsit condicio proprias qua Gallia vires  
 exsereret, trepidam dum Maximus occupat ur-  
 bem; 545

orbem sat potuit, si te sibi tota magistro  
 regna reformasset. quis nostrum Belgica rura,  
 litus Aremorici, Geticas quis moverit iras,  
 non latet: his tantis tibi cessimus, inclite, bellis.  
 nunc iam summa vocant; dubio sub tempore reg-  
 num 550

non regit ignavus. postponitur ambitus omnis  
 ultima cum claros quaerunt: post damna Ticini  
 ac Trebiae trepidans raptim respublica venit  
 ad Fabium; Cannas celebres Varrone fugato  
 Scipiadamque etiam turgentem funere Poenum 555  
 Livius electus fregit. captivus, ut aiunt,  
 orbis in urbe iacet; princeps perit, hic caput omne  
 nunc habet imperium. petimus, conscende tribunal,

546. orbem sat potuit *Leo*: orbem ego sat potui *MC*, orbem  
 inmo potuit *TF*.

<sup>1</sup> Referring to Valentinian III.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to Avitus's organisation of resistance to Attila; see *vv.* 316-356.

## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

emperor,<sup>1</sup> tearing our prosperity to shreds, it would belike be tedious to make plaint, O mighty leader, since verily thou wert the chiefest figure among the mourners, lamenting ever thy country's wounds and tortured by uncontrollable anxieties. Amid those calamities, that universal destruction, to live was death. But as we, taught by our fathers' words, paid homage to idle laws and deemed it a hallowed duty to cling to the old order even through disasters, we endured that shadow of Empire, content to bear even the vices of an ancient stock and to tolerate, more from custom than by reason of just claim, a house that had been wont to be invested with the purple. Of late a golden opportunity shone forth, whereby Gaul might make her own strength felt, while Maximus was possessing himself of the panic-stricken capital; and she might well have possessed herself of the world if with thee as Master she had restored to herself all her rightful lands. 'Tis no secret who of us it was that stirred up the Belgian land, the Aremoric shore and the Gothic fury.<sup>2</sup> In this dread warfare we yielded pride of place to thee, renowned one. Now the supreme office calls for thee; in time of peril a realm cannot be ruled by a poltroon. All ambitious rivalry gives place when extremity calls for men of renown. After the losses of Ticinum and Trebia the trembling republic came in haste to Fabius. By the election of Livius the disaster of Cannae, famous for Varro's rout, was undone; undone too was the Carthaginian, still exulting over the deaths of the Scipios. The world, they say, lies captive in the captive city; the Emperor has perished, and now the Empire has its head here. Ascend the tribunal, we beseech thee, and raise up

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

erige collapsos; non hoc modo tempora poscunt,  
ut Romam plus alter amet. nec forte reare 560  
te regno non esse parem: cum Brennica signa  
Tarpeium premerent, scis, tum respublica nostra  
tota Camillus erat, patriae qui debitus ultor  
textit fumantes hostili strage favillas.

non tibi centurias aurum populare paravit, 565  
nec modo venales numerosoque asse redemptae  
concurrunt ad puncta tribus; suffragia mundi  
nullus emit. pauper legeris; quod sufficit unum,  
es meritis dives. patriae cur vota moraris,  
quae iubet ut iubeas? haec est sententia cunctis: 570  
si dominus fis, liber ero.'

"Fragor atria complet

Vierni, quo forte loco pia turba senatus  
detulerat vim, vota, preces. locus, hora diesque  
dicitur imperio felix, ac protinus illic  
nobilium excubias gaudens sollertia mandat. 575

"Tertia lux refugis Hyperiona fuderat astris:  
concurrunt proceres ac milite circumfuso  
aggere composito statuunt ac torque coronant  
castrensi maestum donantque insignia regni;  
nam prius induerat solas de principe curas. 580  
haud alio quondam vultu Tirynthius heros

572. uierni *M*, Ugerni *Sirmond.*: t(h)ierni.

580. nam *Mohr*: iam.

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<sup>1</sup> Viernum, or Ugernum, modern Beaucuire, near Arles. The meeting here referred to was a hastily summoned assembly of Gallic notabilities, not the representative assembly of Gaul (on which see *Introd.* p. xii, *Bury I.* pp. 207 sq.), which met at Arles.

## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

the fainting; this time of peril asks not that some other should love Rome more. Nor do thou by any chance deem thyself unequal to sovereignty. When Brennus' host beset the Tarpeian rock, then, thou knowest, Camillus was himself the whole of our state, and he, the destined avenger of his country, covered the smoking embers of the city with the slaughtered enemy. No gold scattered among the people hath secured for thee the verdict of the centuries; this time no venal tribes bought with plenteous coin rush to give their votes; the suffrages of the world no one can buy. Though a poor man, thou art being chosen; rich art thou in thy deserts, and that suffices in itself. Why dost thou hinder the desires of thy country, when she orders thee to give orders to her? This is the judgment of all: "if thou becomest the master I shall be free."

"Then a great clamour filled the hall of Viernum<sup>1</sup> (for it was in this place, as it chanced, that the senate's devoted throng had brought before him the force of its authority, its desires, and its prayers). Place, hour, and day are declared auspicious for the assumption of empire, and straightway those resourceful nobles joyously order a guard to be set there.

"The third day had spread the sun's light over the retreating stars: the lords of the land assemble in haste and with soldiers all around set him on a mound-platform<sup>2</sup>; there they crown their sorrowing chief with a military collar and present him with the outward emblems of sovereignty (hitherto the only attribute of an Emperor he had assumed was his cares). With such a look did the Tiryntian hero

<sup>2</sup> The next stage was the proclamation of the Emperor by the soldiers.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

pondera suscepit caeli simul atque novercae  
cum Libyca se rupe Gigas subduceret et cum  
tutior Herculeo sedisset machina dorso.

“Hunc tibi, Roma, dedi, patulis dum Gallia  
campis 585

intonat Augustum plausu faustumque fragorem  
portat in exsanguem Borcas iam fortior Austrum.

hic tibi restituet Libyen per vincula quarta,  
et cuius solum amissas post saecula multa  
Pannonias revocavit iter, iam credere promptum  
est 590

quid faciat bellis. o quas tibi saepe iugabit  
inflictis gentes aquilis, qui maxima regni  
omina privatus fugit, cum forte vianti  
excuteret praepes plebeium motus amictum!  
laetior at tanto modo principe, prisca deorum 595  
Roma parens, attolle genas ac turpe veterum  
depone: en princeps faciet iuvenescere maior,  
quam pueri fecere senem.”

Finem pater ore  
vix dederat: plausere dei fremitusque cucurrit

<sup>1</sup> Juno. Her jealous hatred dogged Hercules from his birth, and was the prime cause of his “labours.” It was while engaged on one of these (the quest of the golden apples) that he temporarily took the burden of the heavens from the shoulders of Atlas (the “giant” of this passage).

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* the Vandals, now pale with fright.

<sup>3</sup> A very mysterious allusion. Avitus was proclaimed Emperor in July and reached Rome in September, A.D. 455. There is no reason to believe that he took a long time over his journey; the statement sometimes made that he left Gaul in July has neither common sense nor ancient authority to support it. It is scarcely credible that he turned aside at this time to make a demonstration against the “barbarians” in Pannonia. He may have sent a force under one of his generals; it was

## VII. PANEGYRIC ON AVITUS

of old take upon him the burden alike of the sky and of his stepmother<sup>1</sup> when the giant withdrew himself from the Libyan mount and the firmament had sunk with greater safety upon the back of Hercules.

"This man I have given thee, Rome, while Gaul throughout her wide plains thunders with plaudits for Augustus, and the north, now stronger, carries the auspicious clamour to the pale-cheeked south.<sup>2</sup> He shall restore Libya to thee a fourth time in chains—and when a man has recovered the lost Pannonias after so many generations by a mere march,<sup>3</sup> 'tis easy to feel sure even now of what he can do by waging war. How he shall, time and again, bring nations under thy yoke, dashing his eagles against them!—that man who as a subject shrank from the glorious omens of sovereignty, when it chanced that as he journeyed a startled bird struck from his shoulders the common cloak he wore. But now be of good cheer with such a man for Emperor, O Rome, ancient mother of gods; lift up thine eyes and cast off thine unseemly gloom. Lo! a prince of riper years shall bring back youth to thee, whom child-princes have made old."

The great Father had scarce ended his utterance when the gods clapped their hands and a shout of

quite in order to give the Emperor credit for a military success won under his auspices. If Avitus did not lead the expedition it may have taken place even after his arrival in Rome. It is, however, probable that *iter* means the journey of Avitus from Gaul to Rome, and that in the course of it there came some good news or friendly overtures from Pannonia, which Sidonius attributes to the prestige of the new Emperor and the fear produced by his journey southward. The contrast of *iter* with *bellis* seems to imply that there was no fighting on this occasion.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

concilio. felix tempus nevere sorores 600  
 imperiis, Auguste, tuis et consulis anno  
 fulva volubilibus duxerunt saecula pensis.

### VIII

#### AD PRISCVM VALERIANVM VIRVM PRAEFECTORIVM

Prisce, decus semper nostrum, cui principe Avito  
 cognatum sociat purpura celsa genus,  
 ad tua cum nostrae currant examina nugae,  
 dico: "state, vagae; quo properatis? amat.  
 destriectus semper censor, qui diligit, exstat; 5  
 dura fronte legit mollis amicitia.  
 nil totum prodest adiectum laudibus illud  
 Vlpia quod rutilat porticus aere meo  
 vel quod adhuc populo simul et plaudente senatu  
 ad nostrum reboat concava Roma sophos." 10  
 respondent illae: "properabimus, ibimus, et nos  
 non retines: tanto iudice culpa placet.  
 cognitor hoc nullus melior; bene carmina pensat  
 contemptu tardo, iudicio celeri."  
 et quia non potui temeraria sistere verba, 15  
 hoc rogo, ne dubites lecta dicare rogo.

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<sup>1</sup> Almost the only information which we have about Priscus Valerianus is derived from this poem and from *Epist.* V. 10. The superscription of the poem shows that Valerianus had risen to be Praetorian Prefect of Gaul, but does not, as some authorities suppose, state that he held that office at the time when the verses were written.

<sup>2</sup> For the statue of Sidonius in Trajan's Forum see *Introd.*, p. xxxvii.



## VIII. TO PRISCUS VALERIANUS

applause rang through the council. The fateful Sisters spun out a happy time for thy rule, Augustus, and for thy consular year they drew out with their whirling spindles a golden age.

### VIII

#### TO PRISCUS VALERIANUS, OF PREFECTORIAN RANK<sup>1</sup>

Priscus, my unceasing pride, whose race is by right of kinship linked with the majestic purple, now that Avitus is Emperor: as my trifling effusions are hurrying off to encounter your judgment, I say, "Halt, flighty creatures! Whither are you hastening? He loves me, and he who loves ever shows himself an unsparing judge; gentle friendship reads with harsh brow. It boots me not that there is added to the tale of my merits all the glory of my form in bronze<sup>2</sup> gleaming red in the Ulpian portico and the huzzas for me that still re-echo from the recesses of Rome's hills,<sup>3</sup> while senate and people alike sound my praises." Then they reply: "We *will* hasten, we *will* go, and you shall not hold us back. With such a man to judge us even censure is sweet. There is no better critic than he; skilfully does he weigh poems, and though quick of judgment he is slow to scorn." And so, as I could not keep my reckless verses from going, hesitate not, when you have read them, to let the fire prey on them, I pray you.

<sup>1</sup> *Concava Roma* is a bold expression, in which *concava* is even more difficult to translate than it is in Verg. *Georg.* IV. 49 (also referring to echoes), *concava pulsu saxa sonant*. The circle of Rome's hills suggests the idea of a building with concave walls, from which echoes are flung back.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

## IX

## AD FELICEM

LARGAM SOLLIVS HANC APOLLINARIS  
FELICI DOMINO PIOQVE FRATRI  
DICIT SIDONIVS SVVS SALVTEM.

Die, die quod peto, Magne, die, amabo,  
Felix nomine, mente, honore, forma, 5  
natis, coniuge, fratribus, parente,  
germanis genitoris atque matris  
et summo patruelium Canillo:  
quid nugas temerarias amici,  
sparsit quas tenerae iocus iuventae, 10  
in formam redigi iubes libelli,  
ingentem simul et repente fascem  
conflari invidiae et perire chartam?  
mandatis famulor, sed ante testor,  
lector quas patieris hic salebras. 15

Non nos currimus aggerem vetustum  
nec quicquam invenies ubi priorum  
antiquas terat orbitas Thalia.  
non hic antipodas salumque rubrum,  
non hic Memnonios canemus Indos  
Aurorae face civica perustos ;  
non Artaxata, Susa, Bactra, Carrhas,  
non coctam Babylona personabo,

<sup>1</sup> Magnus Felix, son of Magnus (23. 453 n.), was a school-fellow of Sidonius (v. 330, below). He rose to be Praetorian Prefect of Gaul and Patrician. He lived in Narbonne. *Epist.* II. 3, III. 4 and 7, IV. 5 and 10 are addressed to him. See also *Carm.* 24. 91 and, for his connexion with Philagrius, n. on 7. 156.

<sup>2</sup> The wife's name was Attica. An extant epigram records that she built a church.

## IX. TO FELIX

### IX

#### TO FELIX

TO THE LORD FELIX,  
HIS LOVING BROTHER,  
SOLLIVS APOLLINARIS SIDONIUS  
HEREBY GIVES HEARTIEST GREETING.

Come tell me, tell me what I want to know, tell me, Magnus,<sup>1</sup> please, Magnus Felix, felicitous in your name, in your intellect, in your eminence, your person, your children, wife,<sup>2</sup> brothers,<sup>3</sup> parents, your father's and mother's brothers,<sup>4</sup> and that chiefest of all cousins, Camillus<sup>5</sup>—why do you demand that the thoughtless scribblings of your friend, broadcast in the frolicsome spirit of early youth, should be put into book-form, and thus a great bundle of enmity should suddenly be produced and paper wasted at the same time? I bow to your commands, but first I declare to you what jolts you are going to suffer here as you read.

I am not speeding over the old road; you shall find here no place where my muse treads in the antique ruts of my predecessors. I shall not here sing of Antipodes or Red Sea or Memnon's Indians burnt by Aurora's torch blazing in her homeland. I shall not trumpet forth Artaxata, Susa, Bactra, Carrhae or brick-built Babylon, which opens out

<sup>1</sup> Probus (24. 94 n.) was a brother of Felix. Araneola, for whose marriage Sidonius wrote *Carm.* 14 and 15, may have been a sister. *Fratres* may mean "brother and sister."

<sup>2</sup> One of the brothers of Magnus was the father of Camillus. He was a proconsul before A.D. 461 (*Epist.* I. 11. 10).

<sup>3</sup> Camillus, as we learn from *Epist.* I. 11. 10 sq., held two high offices of state and received the title of *industrius*.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

quae largum fluvio patens alumno inclusum bibit hinc et inde Tigrim. non hic Assyriis Ninum priorem, non Medis caput Arbacen profabor, nec quam divite, cum refugit hostem, arsit Sardanapallus in favilla.	25
non Cyrum Astyagis loquar nepotem, nutritum ubere quem ferunt canino, cuius non valuit rapacitatem vel Lydi satiare gaza Croesi; cuius nec feritas subacta tunc est, caesis milibus ante cum ducentis in vallis Scythicae coactus artum orbatae ad Tomyris veniret utrem.	30
Non hic Cecropios leges triumphos, vel si quo Marathon rubet duello, aut, cum milia mille concitaret, inflatum numerositate Xerxen, atque hunc fluminibus satis profundis confestim ebibitis adhuc sitisse; nec non Thermopylas et Helles undas spretis obicibus soli salique insanis equitasse cum catervis admissoque in Athon tumente ponto iuxta frondiferae cacumen Alpīs scalptas classibus isse per cavernas.	35
Non prolem Garamantici Tonantis, regnis principibusque principantem, porrectas Asiae loquar paterno actum fulmine pervolassee terras	40
	45
	50

44. Helles *Luc. Mueller* : hel(l)is.

<sup>1</sup> "Tigris" should be "Euphrates."

<sup>2</sup> Cyrus had slain the son of Tomyris, queen of the Massagae-

## IX. TO FELIX

afar to receive the stream that nourishes it and so drinks the 'Tigris' <sup>1</sup> on both banks within the walls. I shall not here proclaim the earlier Ninus of the Assyrians nor Arbaces, head of the Medes, nor the richness of the pyre on which Sardanapallus burned when he sought refuge from the foe. I shall not tell of Astyages' grandson, Cyrus, who they say was suckled at a bitch's breast, a man whose greed not even the treasure of Lydian Croesus could sate, whose fierceness was not subdued even when, having slain two hundred thousand, he was hemmed within a narrow Scythian valley and drew nigh to the bag of the bereaved Tomyris.<sup>2</sup>

You shall not read here of Athenian triumphs or of any war that may have dyed Marathon red, or how Xerxes, stirring up a thousand thousand men, was puffed up by their multitudinousness, or how, when rivers of great depth had been drunk up in a trice, he still thirsted, or the tale of Thermopylae, or how, scorning the barriers of land and sea, he rode with his mad hordes over the waters that Helle named <sup>3</sup> and, letting into Athos waves that rose well-nigh to the summit of that leafy Alp, he passed on shipboard through the deep channel he had cut.

I shall not relate how the offspring of the Garamantian Thunder-god,<sup>4</sup> lording it over lords and kingdoms, was sped on by his father's thunderbolt and swept through Asia's widespread lands; how

tae. Soon afterwards she enticed the Persians into a narrow pass, and slew Cyrus and all his men. She ordered his head to be cut off and thrown into a bag filled with blood, thus reviling his cruelty: "Sate yourself with the blood for which you thirsted insatiably."

<sup>3</sup> The Hellespont.

<sup>4</sup> Alexander the Great: see 2, 121-126.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

et primum Darii tumultuantes  
 praefectos satrapasque perculisse, 55  
 mox ipsum solio patrum superbum  
 cognatosque sibi deos crepantem  
 captis coniuge, liberis, parente  
 in casus hominis redire iussum ;  
 qui cum maxima bella concitasset 60  
 tota et Persidis undique gregatae  
 uno constituisset arma campo,  
 hoc solum perhibetur assecutus,  
 dormire ut melius liberet hosti.

Non vectos Minyas loquente silva 65  
dicam Phasiaco stetitque portu,  
forma percita cum ducis Pelasgi  
molliret rabidos virago tauros,  
nec tum territa, cum suus colonus  
post anguis domiti satos molares 70  
armatas tremebundus inter herbas  
florere in segetem stuperet hostem  
et pugnantibus hinc et hinc aristis  
supra belliferas madere glaebas  
culmosos viridi cruore fratres. 75

Non hic terrigenam loquar cohortem  
admixto mage vividam veneno,  
cui practer speciem modo carentem  
angues corporibus voluminosis  
alte squamea crura porrigentes  
in vestigia fauce desinebant.

65. *vescos* (*vescas* *f'*) *codic.*

<sup>1</sup> The "plain" is that of Gaugamela, where Alexander routed Darius and overthrew the Persian Empire (331 B.C., the so-called Battle of Arbela). On the day appointed for the battle Alexander slept until an alarmingly late hour. When Parmenio with difficulty awoke him and asked how he

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he first laid low in confusion the governors and satraps of Darius and then the king himself, a monarch that proudly exulted in the throne of his father and prated of his kin the gods, but now, with wife, children and mother captured, was forced to relapse into a mere mortal's lot, and who, 'tis said, when he had stirred up a mighty war and had set in one plain the whole armed force of Persia gathered from every part, won thereby this one thing only—that his enemy was disposed to sleep the better for it.<sup>1</sup>

Nor shall I tell how the Minyae were carried over the sea by the talking timber<sup>2</sup> and halted in the harbour of the Phasis, what time the man-like maid, smitten by the beauty of the Grecian leader, soothed the raging bulls and knew no terror even when he whom she had made a tiller of the soil had sown the teeth of the vanquished serpent and stood trembling amid the armed shoots, aghast to see a foe burst into crop and the spikes take sides and fight with one another, while over the war-breeding clods the stalky brothers dripped with green blood.

I shall not here speak of the earth-born band made more live by the venom in their veins, who, besides a form that had outgrown all limits, had likewise snakes with coiling bodies, extending their scaly legs on high and ending in mouths that served

could possibly sleep so long on that most important of all days, Alexander answered, "Don't you think the victory is as good as won, now that we are freed from the necessity of roaming far and wide over desolate country in pursuit of the elusive Darius?" (Plutarch, *Alex.* 32). The "wife, children and mother" of Darius were captured at the Battle of Issus (333 B.C.).

<sup>2</sup> One plank of the *Argo* was endowed with speech.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

sic formae triplicis procax iuventus tellurem pede proterens voraci currebat capitum stupenda gressu et cum classica numinum sonabant	85
mox contra tonitrus resibilante audebat superos ciere planta. nec Phlegrae legis ampliata rura, missi dum volitant per astra montes Pindus, Pelion, Ossa, Olympus, Othrys	90
cum silvis, gregibus, feris, pruinis, saxis, fontibus, oppidis levati vibrantum spatiosiore dextra. Non hic Herculis excolam labores, cui sus, cerva, leo, Gigas, Amazon,	95
hospes, taurus, Eryx, aves, Lycus, fur, Nessus, Libs, iuga, poma, virgo, serpens, Oete, Thraces equi, boves Hiberæ, luctator fluviis, canis triformis portatusque polus polum dederunt.	100
Non hic Elida nobilem quadrigis nec notam nimis amnis ex amore versu prosequar, ut per ima ponti Alpheus fluat atque transmarina in fluctus cadat unda coniugales.	105
Non hic Tantaleam domum retexam, qua mixtum Pelopea per parentem est prolis facta soror novoque monstro infamem genuit pater nepotem; nil maestum hic canitur; nec esculentam	110

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 6. 26.

<sup>2</sup> The plains are "enlarged" by the removal of the mountains.



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as feet.<sup>1</sup> Thus that arrogant young band of triple-formed monsters, trampling the earth with ravenous feet, would run in marvellous wise with stepping heads; and when the war-trumps of the gods sounded they thereupon dared to challenge the denizens of heaven with foot hissing in reply to the thunder's roar. Nor do you read here of Phlegra's plains enlarged<sup>2</sup> when hurtling mountains flew about among the stars, Pindus, Pelion, Ossa, Olympus, Othrys, with their woods, herds, beasts, frosts, rocks, springs, and towns, all uplifted by the hurlers' right hands that were broader than they.

I shall not here embellish the labours of Hercules,<sup>3</sup> to whom boar, deer, lion, giant, Amazon, host, bull, Eryx, birds, Lycus, thief, Nessus, Libyan, hills, apples, maid, serpent, Oeta, Thracian steeds, Spanish cows, wrestling river, tri-formed dog and the carrying of heaven gave heaven as a reward.

I shall not here celebrate in verse Elis renowned for the four-horse chariots nor her who is so famed for a river's love,<sup>4</sup> telling how Alpheus flows through the lowest deeps of the sea and the water on the other side falls into the connubial waves.

I shall not here recall the house of Tantalus, wherein Pelopea by union with a father became the sister of her children and her father by an unheard-of deed of horror begat an infamous grandson. Nothing doleful is here sung; I do not relate the

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 15. 141 sqq. Most of the references are obvious. The "giant" is perhaps Typhoeus, the "host" is probably Busiris, the "thief" is Cacus, the "Libyan" is Antaeus, the "hills" are Calpe and Abyla (the "Pillars of Hercules"), the "maid" is Hesione, the "Thracian steeds" are those of Diomedes.

<sup>4</sup> Arethusa.

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fletus pingimus ad dapem Thyestae,  
fratris crimine qui miser voratis  
vivum pignoribus fuit sepulcrum,  
cum post has epulas repente flexis  
Titan curribus occidens ad ortum  
convivam fugeret, diem fugaret. 115

Nec Phryx pastor erit tibi legendus,  
decrescens cui Dindymon reciso  
fertur vertice texuisse classem,  
cum iussu Veneris patrocinantis  
terras Oebalias et hospitales 120  
raptor depopulatus est Amyclas,  
praedam trans pelagus petens sequacem.  
sed nec Pergama nec decenne bellum  
nec saevas Agamemnonis phalangas 125  
nec periuria persequar Sinonis,  
arx quo Palladio dicata signo  
pellaci reserata proditore  
portantem pedites equum recepit.

Non hic Maeoniae stilo Camenae 130  
civis Dulichii Thessalique  
virtutem sapientiamque narro,  
quorum hic Peliaco putatur antro  
venatu, fidibus, palaestra et herbis  
sub Saturnigena sene institutus, 135  
dum nunc lustra terens puer ferarum  
passim per Pholoen iacet nivosam,  
nunc praesepibus accubans amatis  
dormit mollius in iuba magistri;  
inde Scyriadum datus parenti 140  
falsae nomina pertulisse Pyrrhae

111. pingimus : pangimus *vulgo*, fingimus *Buecheler*.

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<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* the sun, when in the middle of its course, suddenly turned back, making the day retreat.

## IX. TO FELIX

weeping of Thyestes at the gluttonous feast, who by his brother's crime, unhappy one, was a living tomb for the children he devoured, while the sun, after that horrible banquet, suddenly turning his car, set toward the east, and fleeing from the feaster put the day to flight.<sup>1</sup>

Nor shall you have to read of the Phrygian shepherd<sup>2</sup> for whom, 'tis said, Dindymon<sup>3</sup> grew smaller and with her lopped crest formed a fleet, when by order of Venus his abettor that ravisher despoiled the land of Oebalia and hospitable Amyclae, seeking across the sea a prey that willingly followed him. Nay, I shall not go over the tale of Troy and the ten years' war and the fierce battalions of Agamemnon and the treachery of Sinon whereby the citadel dedicated to the image of Pallas was laid open through the work of a wily betrayer and admitted the horse that carried foot-soldiers.

I do not here relate with the pen of the Maeonian muse the wisdom of the Dulichian and the valour of the Thessalian<sup>4</sup>; of whom the second is deemed to have been trained in a cave of Pelion under an aged son of Saturn<sup>5</sup> in hunting, in the music of the lyre, in wrestling and in the use of simples; and the boy, as he scoured the wild beasts' haunts, would sometimes repose on any part of snowy Pholoe, at other times he would recline in the well-loved stall, sleeping more comfortably on his tutor's mane; then, says the story, he was given to the father of the Scyrian maids, enduring the false name of

<sup>1</sup> Paris.

<sup>2</sup> Sidonius is here imitating Statius *Silv.* I. l. 10, the only other passage where the nominative form *Dindymon* occurs. *Dindymus* and *Dindyma* (plur.) are the usual forms.

<sup>4</sup> Ulysses and Achilles.

<sup>5</sup> Chiron.

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atque inter tetricae choros Minervae occultos Veneri rotasse thyrsos; postremo ad Phrygiae sonum rapinae tractus laudibus Hectoris trahendi.	145
ast illum, cui contigit paternam quantum post Ithacam redire lustrum, nec Zmyrnae satis explicat volumen, nam quis continuare possit illos quos terra et pelago tulit labores:	150
raptum Palladium, repertum Achillem, captum praepetibus Dolona plantis et Rhesi niveas prius quadrigas Xanthi quam biberent fluenta tractas, ereptam quoque quam deus patronus,	155
Philocteta, tibi dedit pharetram, Aiace[m] Telamonium furem quod sese ante rates agente causam pugnacis tulit eloquens coronam, vitatum hinc Polyphemon atque Circen	160
et Laestrygonii famem tyranni, tum pomaria divitis, Calypso et Sirenas pereuntibus placentes, vitatas tenebras facemque Naupli et Scyllae rabidum voracis inguen	165
vel Tauromenitana quos Charybdis ructato scopulos cavat profundo? Non divos specialibus faventes agris, urbibus insulisque canto, Saturnum Latio Iovemque Cretae	170
Iunonemque Samo Rhodoque Solem, Hennae Persephonen, Minervam Hymetto, Vulcanum Liparae, Papho Dionen,	

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<sup>1</sup> Or perhaps "by the glorious prospect of dragging Hector."

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Pyrtha, and amid the band of stern Minerva's votaries he honoured Venus in secret revels: lastly, when the noise of the Phrygian spoiling reached his ears, he was dragged away by the glories of that Hector who would himself one day be dragged.<sup>1</sup> But as for the other hero, whose hap it was to return to Ithaca, the land of his father, after four lustres had passed, even Smyrna's scroll<sup>2</sup> does not unfold the whole tale. Nay, who could relate the whole succession of toils that he endured on land and sea—the seizing of the Palladium, the finding of Achilles, the capture of swift-footed Dolon, and the four snow-white chariot-horses of Rhesus taken away before they could drink of Xanthus' stream; likewise the snatching of the quiver given to Philoctetes by his patron god and the madness of Ajax son of Telamon because when he stood before the ships and pled his cause the man of words won the prize of the man of arms; then the escape from Polyphemus, from Circe, and from the hunger of the Laestrygonian king, and thereafter the rich man's orchard, and Calypso and the Sirens who charmed men to their doom; his escape likewise from the darkness and the torch of Nauplius<sup>3</sup> and the raging groin of ravening Scylla and the rocks that Charybdis of Tauromenium hollows out by the belching of the deep?

I sing not of the divinities that show favour to special lands, cities, and islands; Saturn to Latium, Jove to Crete, Juno to Samos, the Sun-god to Rhodes, Proserpine to Henna, Minerva to Hymettus, Vulcan to Lipara, Dione to Paphos, Perseus to Argos,

<sup>2</sup> Homer.

<sup>3</sup> Nauplius, by showing false lights on the cliffs of Euboea, wrecked the Greek ships on their way back from Troy.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Argis Persea, Lampsaco Priapum, Thebis Euhion Ilioque Vestam, Thymbrae Delion, Arcadem Lycaco, Martem Thracibus ac Scythis Dianam, quos fecere deos dicata templa, tus, sal, far, mola vel superfluarum consecratio caerimoniarum.	175      180
Non cum Triptolemo verendam Eleusin, qui primas populis dedere aristas pastis Chaonium per ilicetum, non Apin Mareoticum sonabo ad Memphitica sistra concitari.	    185
non dicam Lacedaemonos iuventam unctas Tyndaridis dicasse luctas, doctos quos patriis palen Therapnis gymnas Bebrycii tremit theatri; non sortes Lyciasque Caeritumque, responso aut Themidis priora Delphis, nec quae fulmine Tuscus expiato saeptum numina quaerit ad bidental; nec quos Euganeum bibens Timavum colle Antenoreo videbat augur	     190    195
divos Thessalicam movere pugnam; nec quos Amphiaraus et Melampus	
* * *	
ex ipsis rapuit deos favillis per templum male fluctuante flamma gaudens lumine perditio Metellus.	  200

<sup>1</sup> See 5. 163 n.

<sup>2</sup> A place struck by lightning. Such places were *lora religiosa*, i.e. a taboo was attached to them. The lightning was ceremonially "buried" (*fulmen condere*) and a sheep sacrificed (hence the name, from *bidens*); then the spot was doubly enclosed by a high kerb and an outer wall. At Rome

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Priapus to Lampsacus, Bacchus to Thebes, Vesta to Ilium, the Delian god to Thymbra, the Arcadian to Lycaeus, Mars to Thrace, Diana to Scythia, who have all been made gods by the dedication of temples to them, by incense, salt, spelt, meal, and the hallowing of vain rites.

I shall not trumpet forth the worshipful Eleusis and Triptolemus, givers of the first corn to folks wont to find their food in the Chaonian oak-forest; nor Egyptian Apis aroused by the sounds of the Memphitic sistrum. I shall not tell how Sparta's young manhood dedicated the oily wrestling-bout to the sons of Tyndarus, at whose prowess, learned in their native Therapnae, the athletes of the Bebrycian<sup>1</sup> arena trembled. Nor shall my theme be Lycian or Caerite oracles or the earlier responses of Themis at Delphi or the divinities that the Tuscan, when he expiates the lightning, seeks at the fenced bidental,<sup>2</sup> or the gods whom on Antenor's mount the seer<sup>3</sup> who drank the waters of Euganean Timavus saw stirring up the Thessalian battle; nor of those whom Amphiaras and Melampus . . . (nor of) the gods that Metellus<sup>4</sup> snatched even from the midst of the burning, when the flames surged ruinously through the temple, and he rejoiced in the loss of

the help of Etruscan experts was frequently enlisted on such occasions. Sidonius is probably thinking of the Puteal Libonis in the Roman Forum.

<sup>3</sup> Cornelius, a priest, was said to have seen at Patavium a vision of the battle of Pharsalia. Sidonius is thinking of Lucan VII. 192 sqq., where the story is related with considerable scepticism. For *Euganeum* see n. on 2. 189.

<sup>4</sup> L. Caecilius Metellus, Pontifex Maximus, rescued the Palladium when the temple of Vesta caught fire in 241 B.C. His bravery cost him his eyesight. The generalising plural *dei* is often used of an action affecting one deity.

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non hic Cinyphius canetur Hammon  
 mitratum caput elevans harenis,  
 vix se post hecatombion litatum  
 suetus promere Syrtium barathro.  
 non hic Dindyma nec crepante buxo 205  
 Curetas Berecynthiam sonantes,  
 non Bacchum trieterica exserentem  
 describam et tremulas furore festo  
 ire in Bassaridas vel infulatos  
 aram ad turicremam rotare mystas. 210  
 Non hic Hesiodæa pinguis Ascræ  
 spectes carmina Pindarique chordas;  
 non hic socciferi iocos Menandri,  
 non laesi Archilochi feros iambos,  
 vel plus Stesichori graves Camenas, 215  
 aut quod composuit puella Lesbis;  
 non quod Mantua contumax Homero  
 adiecit Latiaribus loquelis,  
 æquari sibimet subinde livens  
 busto Parthenopam Maroniano; 220  
 non quod post saturas epistularum  
 sermonumque sales novumque epodon,  
 libros carminis ac poeticam artem

216. Lesbis *Luetjohann* : lesbi.

221. post *Leo* : per *codd.*, quod retineri potest si valuit (*Luetjohann*) in v. 225 legas.

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<sup>1</sup> It is surprising to find (H)ammon wearing a *mitra* on his horned head. Bacchus is so represented in *Sen. Phædr.* 756, and Sidonius may have had a confused recollection of that passage. By *Syrtes* here Sidonius may mean "the land near the Syrtes"; the Roman poets are always ready to bring any Libyan lands near to those famous gulfs; see 5. 263 sq. and Lucan IV. 673, *confinis Syrtibus Hammon*. He may, however, be alluding to the fact, that the land extending from the Syrtes to the oasis of Ammon had formerly been covered by the sea; see Strabo I. 3, 4.



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his sight. Here no Cinyphian Hammon<sup>1</sup> shall be sung, who raises his snooded head among the desert sands and even after auspicious sacrifice of a hecatomb will scarce show himself from the depths of the Syrtes; nor shall I picture Dindyma or the Curetes sounding on murmuring box-pipe the praises of the Berecynthian Mother; nor Bacchus, as he brings forth his triennial festival and invades the Bassarids quivering with the frenzy of the feast and whirls his fillet-crowned votaries beside the incense-burning altar.

Not here shall you behold the Hesiodic strains of sluggish Ascrea or Pindar's lyre; nor the jests of Menander, wearer of comedy's sock; nor the savage lampoons of the injured Archilochus; nor the graver muse of Stesichorus or the song fashioned by the Lesbian maid; nor that which Mantua, defying Homer's supremacy, added to Latin utterance—Mantua, soon jealous that Parthenope matched her by possessing Virgil's tomb; nor the notes that Horace was fain to sound when he penned the praises of Phoebus and roaming Diana after the medleys of the *Epistles*,<sup>2</sup> the witty sallies of the

<sup>2</sup> Sidonius seems to be playing on the word *satura* by using it in its old sense of "medley" and applying it to the *Epistles*, not the *Satires*, of Horace. Horace refers to his *Satires* as *saturae* as well as *sermones*. In Suetonius' life of the poet a phrase from the *Epistles* is said to occur in *saturis*; but this is probably an inadvertence, though Hendrickson in *Am. Journ. Phil.* XVIII (1897), pp. 313-324, uses it, along with the present passage (wrongly punctuated with commas after *saturae* and *sales*) and other inconclusive evidence, to prove that the ancients assigned the *Epistles* as well as the *Satires* to the literary genre called *satura* (or *satira*). Line 224 refers to the *Carmen Saeculare*, the first line of which is *Phoebe silvarumque potens Diana*, but it was not the latest work of Horace, as is implied if the reading here given is correct.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Phoebe laudibus et vagae Dianae  
conscriptis voluit sonare Flaccus ; 225  
non quod Papinius tuus meusque  
inter Labdacios sonat furores  
aut cum forte pedum minore rhythmo  
pingit gemmea prata silvularum.

Non quod Corduba praepotens alumnis  
facundum ciet, hic putes legendum,  
quorum unus colit hispidum Platona  
incassumque suum monet Neronem,  
orchestram quatit alter Euripidis,  
pictum faecibus Aeschylon secutus  
aut plaustis solitum sonare Thespin,  
qui post pulpita trita sub cothurno  
ducebant olidae marem capellae;  
pugnam tertius ille Gallicani  
dixit Caesaris, ut gener socerque  
cognata impulerint in arma Romam,  
tantum dans lacrimas suis Philippis,  
ut credat Cremerae levem ruinam,  
infra et censeat Alliam dolendam  
ac Brenni in trutina Iovem redemptum,  
postponat Trebiam gravesque Cannas,  
stragem nec Trasimenicam loquatur,  
fratres Scipiadas putet silendos,  
quos Tartesiacus retentat orbis,

<sup>1</sup> The *Thebais* and *Silvae* of Statius.

<sup>2</sup> Referring to the long hair and beard typical of the philosopher: cf. *Epist.* IV. 11. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Sidonius wrongly regards the philosopher Seneca as distinct from the writer of tragedies.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Hor. *A.P.* 276 sq.

<sup>5</sup> Hor. *ib.* 220. <sup>6</sup> Lucan.

## IX. TO FELIX

Satires, the new-fangled Epodes, the books of Odes and the Art of Poetry; nor what Papinius, dear to you and to me, utters amid the frenzy of the house of Labdacus, or when in shorter-footed measure he portrays the begemmed meads of his little "Silvae."<sup>1</sup>

Nor must you expect to read here the eloquence called forth by Corduba, great in her sons, of whom one is devoted to the unkempt<sup>2</sup> Plato and vainly admonishes his pupil Nero, another<sup>3</sup> rouses again the stage of Euripides and also follows Aeschylus, who painted his face with wine-lees, and Thespis, who was wont to give utterance from waggons,<sup>4</sup> bards who after treading the stage with their buskins used to lead away the mate of a fetid she-goat:<sup>5</sup> third of Corduba's sons was he who sang the fight of Caesar the Gallic conqueror,<sup>6</sup> how a father and his daughter's husband drove Rome into a war of kinsfolk;<sup>7</sup> and so bitterly does he weep for his Philippi<sup>8</sup> that he deems the disaster of Cremera a trifle, he avers that Allia<sup>9</sup> and the ransom of Jupiter<sup>10</sup> in the scales of Brennus are less to be lamented, he holds Trebia<sup>11</sup> and dire Cannae<sup>12</sup> of less moment, he has naught to say of Trasimene's slaughter, he thinks those Scipios not worth a word whom the region of Tartessus holds, he takes no account of the ruinous

<sup>1</sup> *Cognata arma* probably alludes to Lucan's *cognatas acies*, I. 4.

<sup>2</sup> *Philippi*, i.e. Pharsalia. Poets (Verg. *Georg.* I. 489 sq.) often place Philippi and Pharsalia in the same region. The very first line of Lucan places Pharsalia in Macedonia.

<sup>3</sup> Lucan VII. 409.

<sup>4</sup> *Iovem*, i.e. the Capitol, the habitation of Jupiter.

<sup>11</sup> Lucan II. 46.

<sup>12</sup> *ib.* II. 46, VII. 408.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Euphraten taceat male appetitum, Crassorum et madidas cruore Carrhas vel quos, Spartace, consulum solebas victrici gladios fugare sica, ipsum nec fleat ille plus duellum, quod post Cimbrica turbidus tropaea et vinctum Nasamonium Iugurtham, dum quaerit Mithridaticum triumphum, Arpinas voluit movere Sullae.	250          255
Non Gaetulicus hic tibi legetur, non Marsus, Pedit, Silius, Tibullus, non quod Sulpiciae iocus Thaliae scripsit blandiloquum suo Caleno, non Persi rigor aut lepos Properti, sed nec centimeter Terentianus. non Lucilius hic Lucretiusque est, non Turnus, Memor, Ennius, Catullus, Stella et Septimius Petroniusque aut mordax sine fine Martialis, non qui tempore Caesaris secundi aeterno incoluit Tomos reatu,	       260           265           270

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<sup>1</sup> This and the previous line probably refer to Lucan I. 10 sqq., though the poet does not there say that the disaster of Carrhae was of little account compared with the Civil War; he merely says that the Romans would have done better to avenge Carrhae than to fight among themselves. In I. 103-108 he makes the disaster of Carrhae and the death of Crassus responsible for the Civil War.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Luc. II. 67-133.

<sup>3</sup> In Martial I. *praef.* (which Sidonius probably had in mind) Gaetulicus, Marsus and Pedit are mentioned as epigrammatists. Gaetulicus, after a distinguished official career, was put to death by Caligula, A.D. 39. He is sometimes credited with a historical work, but it was probably an epic poem. He is mentioned again by Sidonius in *Epist.* II. 10. 6. Domitius Marsus, an Augustan poet, wrote, besides epigrams, versified

## IX. TO FELIX

attempt on the Euphrates and of Carrhae drenched with the blood of the Crassi,<sup>1</sup> or of the consuls whose swords Spartacus was wont to rout with victorious dagger; nay, he does not bewail more bitterly that war which the man of Arpinum, wild with arrogance after his Cimbric trophies and the enchainment of Nasamonian Jugurtha, and seeking next a Mithridatic triumph, was fain to stir up against Sulla.<sup>2</sup>

Here you shall read no Gaetulicus, Marsus, Pedo,<sup>3</sup> Silius, or Tibullus, nor the winsome words which Sulpicia's<sup>4</sup> sprightly muse wrote to her Calenus, nor the sternness of Persius nor the liveliness of Propertius, nor yet Terentianus of the hundred metres.<sup>5</sup> Here is no Lucilius, no Lucretius, Turnus, Memor,<sup>6</sup> Ennius, Catullus, Stella,<sup>7</sup> Septimius,<sup>8</sup> or Petronius, no Martial with his constant bite, nor he who in the days of the second Caesar dwelt at Tomi,<sup>9</sup> a prisoner never absolved; nor he who later

tales and an epic. Albinovanus Pedo was a friend of Ovid. He wrote an epic called *Theseis* and a poem (of which an interesting fragment is preserved) on the exploits of Germanicus in the North.

<sup>4</sup> Sulpicia, a writer of love-poetry in the time of Domitian. Calenus was her husband. The *satura* which goes under her name probably belongs to a later age.

<sup>5</sup> *centimeter*: apparently a popular designation of writers on metre, perhaps suggested by the work of Servius, *De Centum Metris*. The reference is to Terentianus Maurus.

<sup>6</sup> Turnus, a satirist, Memor, a writer of tragedies, in the age of Domitian.

<sup>7</sup> L. Arruntius Stella, a native of Padua, often mentioned by his friends Martial and Statius. He wrote love-elegies celebrating Violentilla, who became his wife.

<sup>8</sup> In all probability Septimius Serenus, mentioned in 14 *Praef.* 3, a poet of the age of Hadrian, who wrote *opuscula* on rural themes.

<sup>9</sup> Ovid: cf. 23. 158 sqq.

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nec qui consimili deinde casu ad vulgi tenuem strepentis auram irati fuit histrionis exsul, non Pelusiaco satus Canopo, qui ferruginei toros mariti	275
et Musa canit inferos superna, nec qui iam patribus fuere nostris primo tempore maximi sodales, quorum unus Bonifatium secutus nec non praecipitem Sebastianum	280
natales puer horruit Cadurcos plus Pandionias amans Athenas; cuius si varium legas poema, tunc Phoebum vel Hyantias puellas potato madidas ab Hippocrene,	285
tunc Amphiona filiumque Maiaie, tunc vatem Rhodopeium sonare conlato modulamine arbitreris.	
Non tu hic nunc legeris tuumque fulmen, o dignissime Quintianus alter,	290
spernens qui Ligurum solum et penates mutato lare Gallias amasti, inter classica, signa, pila, turmas laudans Aetium vacansque libro,	
in castris hederate laureatis.	295
sed nec tertius ille nunc legetur, Baetin qui patrium semel relinquens	

295. hederate laureatis *Chatelain*: (h)edera ter laureatus.

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<sup>1</sup> On the stories of Juvenal's banishment see Duff's ed., pp. x-xiii, Plessis, *La Poésie latine* 633-641 (discussion of the present passage on p. 635).

<sup>2</sup> Claudian, *De Raptu Proserpinae*.

## IX. TO FELIX

by a like misfortune, on the stirring of a breath of vulgar gossip, became the exiled victim of an angry actor<sup>1</sup>; nor that son of Egyptian Canopus who of the dusky bridegroom's marriage and of the denizens of hell doth sing with his heavenly muse;<sup>2</sup> nor those who even in their earliest days were the greatest of our fathers' comrades, of whom one,<sup>3</sup> following Boniface and the headstrong Sebastian, abhorred in boyhood his native Cadureans,<sup>4</sup> loving Pandion's Athens more: were you to read his varied poems, then would you think that Phoebus was giving utterance, and the Boeotian maids, their lips all moist with draughts of Hippocrene, and Amphion too and the son of Maia and the bard of Rhodope, all contributing their melody.

Nor does the reader now find thee here, Quintianus,<sup>5</sup> the second of the three, with thy thunderbolt, who spurning thy Ligurian soil and home didst change thine abode and give Gaul thy love, and didst sing the praises of Aëtius amid trumpet-calls, standards, spears, and troops, sparing time for the pen as for the sword, a bard ivy-crowned in a belaurelled camp. Nor shall the reader here find that other,<sup>6</sup> the third of the band, who leaving once for all his native Baetis

<sup>1</sup> The name of this poet is unknown. Sebastian succeeded his father-in-law Boniface as *magister utriusque militiae* in A.D. 432. After an adventurous career he finally betook himself to Geiseric, who put him to death in A.D. 450 because he would not abjure the Catholic faith.

<sup>2</sup> In Aquitaine, S.W. of the Arverni.

<sup>3</sup> *Quintianus*, not otherwise known.

<sup>4</sup> Flavius Merobaudes. The inscription attached to his statue has been found (C. I. L. vi. 1724, Dessau 2950). Its date is A.D. 435. The *princeps* (v. 300) is Valentinian III; this reference to him is astonishingly kind after 7. 359 and 532 ff. In 23. 214 he is *pius princeps*.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

undosae petiit sitim Ravennae,  
plosores cui fulgidam Quirites  
et carus popularitate princeps  
Traiano statuam foro locarunt.

Sed ne tu mihi comparare temptes,  
quos multo minor ipse plus adoro,  
Paulinum Ampeliumque Symmachumque,  
Messalam ingenii satis profundi

et nulli modo Martium secundum,  
dicendi arte nova parem vetustis  
Petrum et cum loquitur nimis stupendum,  
vel quem municipalibus poetis  
praeponit bene villicum senatus,

nostrum aut quos retinet solum disertos,  
dulcem Anthedion et mihi magistri  
Musas sat venerabiles Hoeni,  
acrem Lampridium, catum Leonem  
praestantemque tuba Severianum

<sup>1</sup> This jest about Ravenna is found in Martial III. 56 and 57, and is repeated by Sidonius in *Epist.* I. 8. 2; cf. *ib.* I. 5. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Paulinum*, probably not Pontius Paulinus (*Epist.* VIII. 12. 5), son of Pontius Leontius, whose "Castle" is celebrated in *Carm.* 22. This line seems to refer to (epistolary ?) writers of the age of Symmachus, and Gallo-Roman writers seem to be excluded from this part of the paragraph (see v. 311). The reference may possibly be to Paulinus of Nola, who, though a native of Gaul, came to be closely associated with Italy.

<sup>3</sup> The Ampelius mentioned here is supposed to be P. Ampelius, who held several high offices of state in the fourth century. He died not later than 397. He was a correspondent of Libanius.

<sup>14</sup> Valerius Messala is highly praised for his eloquence by Symmachus, who wrote several letters to him. He is probably the Messala praised by Rutilius Namatianus, I. 267 sqq.

<sup>5</sup> Probably not Martius Myro (23. 444).



## IX. TO FELIX

betook himself to that place of thirst, well-watered Ravenna,<sup>1</sup> and to whom the acclaiming citizens of Rome and the Emperor so beloved for his graciousness set up a gleaming statue in Trajan's Forum.

And try not, gentle reader, to compare me with those whom I, vastly their inferior, worship all the more, Paulinus,<sup>2</sup> Ampelius,<sup>3</sup> and Symmachus, Messala<sup>4</sup> of genius so profound, Martius,<sup>5</sup> second to none in these times, Petrus,<sup>6</sup> equal of the ancients in the modern style of eloquence and a marvel to all when he speaks, or that steward<sup>7</sup> whom the senate rightly prefers to the poets of the towns; or those men of gifted utterance whom our soil possesses, charming Anthedius,<sup>8</sup> my master Hoënius, whose muse commands my deepest reverence, spirited Lampridius,<sup>9</sup> shrewd Leo,<sup>10</sup> and Severi-

<sup>6</sup> 3. 5 n.

<sup>7</sup> *Vilicum* is not likely to be a proper name. Juvenal (IV. 77) uses the word of a *praefectus urbi*. The mention of the Senate in v. 310 makes it probable that Sidonius is thinking of that passage and referring to a contemporary prefect; in his day the *praef. urbi* was president of the Senate. We do not possess a complete list of the city prefects for the period in which this poem must have been written, and there is no evidence that any of the known prefects was a poet. Sidonius plays on the ordinary meaning of *vilicus*, "farm-bailiff."

<sup>8</sup> Anthedius, a friend of Sidonius; 22 *epist.* § 2; *Epist.* VIII. 11. 2. Hoënius is not otherwise known.

<sup>9</sup> Lampridius taught rhetoric at Bordeaux. For an appreciation of him see *Epist.* VIII. 11. 3 sqq.; on his poetical talent *Epist.* IX. 13. 2 *carm.* 20 sq. and § 4. He gained favour with Euric, and Sidonius seems in *Epist.* VIII. 9 to angle for his good offices with that king.

<sup>10</sup> Leo, a native of Narbonne, descended from Fronto (*Epist.* VIII. 3. 3), lauded as a poet (cf. 23. 450-4, *Epist.* IX. 13. 2, *carm.* 20; *ib.* IX. 15. 1, *carm.* 19 sq.) and as a jurist (23. 447). He became a minister of Euric, and no doubt helped to procure the release of Sidonius; see *Introd.*, p. xlix.



## IX. TO FELIX

anus,<sup>1</sup> who excels in trumpet-tones and is no less apt in such writing as Marcus Quintilianus used to pen.

As for these measures of my sadly barren muse, I rarely commit them to a papyrus-sheet, and then only to a short one,<sup>2</sup> which would rightly be used for carrying mackerel or pepper—for what god will ever grant to my scorned sheet even the small boon of sniffing pleasant scents and being used for wrapping nard and oily alabaster flasks fragrant with Nicerotian<sup>3</sup> essences, and cinnamon got from the Indian<sup>4</sup> pyre where the Phoenix renews his youth by dying, and costum and malobathrum and roses and amonium and incense and opobalsamum? Therefore defend my audacious deed and vindicate, I pray you, in its rash escapade the modesty of a school-fellow who is but obeying your orders. But remember first to call in that pillar of learning, your brother Probus, who is able, with all his kindness, to attach a stern obelus to this scribbling. But I know it well, I am not clearing myself of guilt, and a shameless poet does not please the well-instructed. And yet I shall not dread excessively the pompous mouthing of an abusive reader, should he, with an air of superior gravity and sternness, like a third Cato, spurn the jesting of my Terpsichore, purse his lips and threaten me with the contemptuous nose of a rhinoceros. Let not this too consummate pundit frighten you. If you would get at the real truth, believe me, nobody knows as many things as he doesn't know.

extant (*Rhet. Min.*, Halm, pp. 350–370), but there is nothing to prove it. *Tuba* probably refers to Epic poetry.

<sup>2</sup> See Intro., p. lv, n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> An epithet borrowed from Martial (VI. 55. 3, X. 38. 8). Niceros was a famous perfumer in the time of Domitian.

<sup>4</sup> See n. on *Erythræ*, 2. 447.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

## X

### PRAEFATIO EPITHALAMII DICTI RVRICIO ET HIBERIAE

Flucticolae cum festa nurus Pagasaea per antra  
 rupe sub Emathia Pelion explicuit,  
 angustabat humum superum satis ampla supellex;  
 certabant gazis hinc polus hinc pelagus;  
 ducebatque choros viridi prope tectus amictu 5  
 caeruleae pallae concolor ipse socer;  
 nymppha quoque in thalamos veniens de gurgite nuda  
 vestiti coepit membra timere viri.  
 tum divum quicumque aderat terrore remoto  
 quo quis pollebat lusit in officio. 10  
 Iuppiter emisit tepidum sine pondere fulmen  
 et dixit: "melius nunc Cytherea calet."  
 Pollux tum caestu laudatus, Castor habenis,  
 Pallas tum cristis, Delia tum pharetris;  
 Alcides clava, Mavors tum lusit in hasta, 15  
 Arcas tum virga, nebride tum Bromius.  
 hic et Pipliadas induxerat optimus Orpheus  
 chordis, voce, manu, carminibus, calamis.  
 ambitiosus Hymen totas ibi contulit artes;  
 qui non ingenio, fors placuit genio. 20

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<sup>1</sup> Ruricius (to whom *Epist.* IV. 16, V. 15, VIII. 10 are addressed) was a member of a noble family connected with the gens Anicia. Hiberia, whom he married, was the daughter of Ommatius, an Arvernian of good family who does not seem to have taken much part in public life. Ruricius afterwards

## X. PREFACE TO RURICIUS

### X

#### PREFACE TO THE EPITHALAMIUM OF RURICIUS AND HIBERIA <sup>1</sup>

When Pelion displayed the marriage-feast of the sea-maiden <sup>2</sup> in a Pagasæan cave beneath an Emathian crag, the stately pageantry of the gods taxed the ground to hold it; on this side the sky, on that the sea vied one with the other in their treasures, and the song and dance were led by the bride's father almost hidden in his green robe and himself of the same hue as his sea-coloured mantle. The nymph also, coming naked from the waves to her marriage, was seized with fear of the bridegroom's draped form. Then every god that was present laid aside his dreadfulness and exhibited a playful version of his special power. Jupiter hurled a thunderbolt that had heither heat nor force, and said, "At this time it is more fitting for our lady of Cythera to show warmth." Pollux then won praise with the boxing-glove, Castor with reins, Pallas with her plumed helm, the Delian goddess with her arrows; Hercules frolicked with his club, Mars with his spear, the Arcadian god with his wand, Bromius with the fawn-skin. At this moment the Muses also had been introduced by the incomparable Orpheus with strings, voice, hand, songs, and reeds. Hymen, eager to show off, mustered there all arts, and he who did not give pleasure by his merit gave pleasure belike by

entered the Church, and in A.D. 485 became Bishop of Limoges. We possess two books of his letters, written mostly before his episcopate. Two letters are addressed to Sidonius.

<sup>2</sup> Thetis, daughter of Nereus, bride of Peleus.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Fescennina tamen non sunt admissa priusquam  
intonuit solita noster Apollo lyra.

### XI

#### EPITHALAMIVM

[Inter Cyaneas, Ephyraea cacumina, cautes  
qua super Idalium levat Orithyion in aethram  
exesi sale montis apex, ubi forte vagantem  
dum fugit et fixit trepidus Symplegada Tiphys,  
atque recurrentem ructatum ad rauca Maleam,] 5  
exit in Isthmiacum pelagus claudentibus alis  
saxorum de rupe sinus, quo saepe recessu  
sic tamquam toto coeat de lumine caeli,  
artatur collecta dies tremulasque per undas  
insequitur secreta vadi, transmittitur alto 10  
perfusus splendore latex, mirumque relatu,  
lympha bibit solem tenuique inserta fluento  
perforat arenti radio lux sicca liquorem.

Profecit studio spatium; nam Lemnius illic  
ceu templum lusit Veneri fulmenque relinquens 15  
hic ferrugineus fumavit saepe Pyragmon.  
hic lapis est de quinque locis dans quinque colores  
Aethiops, Phrygius, Parius, Poenus, Lacedaemon,

2. orithion *codd.*

11. mirumque *Mohr et in adnot. Luetjohann*: miroque.

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<sup>1</sup> *ingenio* . . . *genio*, an antithesis found in several other places, but the meaning of *genius* varies. Here it probably means "geniality," "mirthfulness." See n. on 2. 191.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* the Apollo of us poets.

<sup>3</sup> The first five lines of this difficult poem are an unintelligible jumble, and *v.* 5 cannot even be construed. *Vv.* 3 and 4 may be by Sidonius; if we retain them and omit *vv.* 1 and 2 *sinus* will be acc. plur. after *claudentibus*, and should probably be altered to *sinum*. Corinth is prominent in the Argonautic

## XI. EPITHALAMIUM

his spirit.<sup>1</sup> But Fescennine jests were not admitted until our Apollo <sup>2</sup> had made his song ring forth on the familiar lyre.

### XI

#### EPITHALAMIUM <sup>3</sup>

[Between the Dark-blue Rocks, Ephyra's peaks, where the summit of a sea-worn mountain raises Orithyion above Idalium <sup>4</sup> to the sky, in which place, as it chanced, the wandering Symplegades were fixed fast by the trembling Tiphys even as he fled from them, . . .] there emerges into the sea of the Isthmus a bay enclosed by wings of piled rocks jutting from the cliff; in which retreat, just as if the whole radiance of the sky were concentrated there, the daylight is gathered together into a narrow space, and penetrating the quivering waters it searches out the secluded depths, and so the ripples pass on, bathed in deep-shining brightness, and, wondrous to tell, the water drinks in the sun and the light, pushed into the limpid stream, bores unwetted through the wet with arid ray.

This site favoured a labour of love; for there the Lemnian god amused himself by building a mimic temple for Venus, and swarthy Pyragmon, abandoning the thunderbolt, raised his smoke in the place many a time. Here is stone from five regions, giving forth five hues, Aethiopian, Phrygian, Parian, Punic, legend, but it is very surprising to find the Symplegades in its neighbourhood. For the legend of the storm encountered by the Argonants off Cape Malea (to which v. 5 must refer) see Herodotus IV. 179.

<sup>4</sup> Or "raises up Idalian Orithyion"—whatever that may mean.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

purpureus, viridis, maculosus, eburnus et albus.  
 postes chrysolithi fulvus diffulgurat ardor; 20  
 myrrhina, sardoniches, amethystus Hiberus, iaspis  
 Indus, Chalcidicus, Scythicus, beryllus, achates  
 attollunt duplices argenti cardine valvas,  
 per quas inclusi lucem vomit umbra smaragdi;  
 limina crassus onyx crustat propterque hyacinthi 25  
 caerula concordem iaciunt in stagna colorem.  
 exterior non compta silex, sed prominet alte  
 asper ab adsiduo lympharum verberare pumex.  
 interiore loco simulavit Mulciber auro  
 exstantes late scopulos atque arte magistra 30  
 ingenti cultu naturae inculta fefellit,  
 huic operi insistens, quod necdum noverat illa  
 quae post Lemniacis damnavit furta catenis.  
 squameus huc Triton duplicis confinia dorsi,  
 qua coeunt supra sinuamina tortilis alvi, 35  
 inter aquas calido portavit corde Dionen.  
 sed premit adiecto radiantis pondere conchae  
 semiferi Galatea latus, quod pollice fixo  
 vellit, et occulto spondet conubia tactu;  
 tum gaudens torquente ioco subridet amator 40  
 vulnere iamque suam parcenti pistre flagellat.  
 pone subit turmis flagrantibus agmen Amorum;  
 hic cohibet delphina rosis, viridique iuvenco  
 hic vectus spretis pendet per cornua frenis;

26. iaciunt *Luetjohann in adnot.* : faciunt.

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<sup>1</sup> The descriptions, if placed in the same order as the stones, would have been "purple (see 5. 34 sqq. n.), spotted, white, ivory (5. 37 sq. n.), green."

<sup>2</sup> *Chalcidicus* probably refers to *chalcitis*, a copper-coloured gem (Plin. *N. H.* XXXVII. 191). *Scythicus* refers to the Scythian emerald, said by Pliny (*N. H.* XXXVII. 65) to be the finest of all: cf. Martial IV. 28. 4.



## XI. EPITHALAMIUM

Spartan—purple, green, mottled, ivory, white.<sup>1</sup> The yellow glow of topaz flashes through the doorpost; porcelain, sardonyx, Caucasian amethyst, Indian jasper, Chalcidian and Scythian stones,<sup>2</sup> beryl and agate, form the double doors that rise upon silver pivots, and through these doors the shadowy recess beyond pours out the sheen of the emeralds that are within. Onyx thickly encrusts the threshold, and hard by the blue colour of amethyst casts upon the lagoon a harmonious hue. Outside is no dressed stone, but towering walls of rock that has been roughened by the constant lashing of the waters. In the inner part Mulciber mimicked in gold the crags that rise up far and wide, and with his skill to guide him counterfeited with mighty art the artless creations of Nature, plying his work diligently—for not yet did he know of that deception which afterwards he punished with his Lemnian chains. Hither scaly Triton with heart aflame bore amid the waters Venus, seated where the boundaries of his double back meet above the windings of his writhing belly.<sup>3</sup> But Galatea has brought up close to him her weighty, glittering shell, and presses his side, which she pinches with inserted thumb, promising by that stealthy touch connubial bliss; whereupon the lover, rejoicing in that torturing jest, smiles at the wound and anon lashes his beloved with a gentle stroke of his fishy tail. Behind them comes a column of Loves in ardent squadrons; one controls a dolphin with reins of roses, another rides on a green sea-calf, despising bridle's aid and clinging to the horns; others are on

<sup>1</sup> The nether half of this merman is fishy, the fore part human; the former is in perpetual motion as he propels himself by lashing the water. Venus is seated on his back, just clear of the agitated fishy half.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

hi stantes motu titubant plantaque madenti 45  
labuntur firmantque pedum vestigia pennis.

Illa recurvato demiserat ora lacerto  
mollia; marcebant violae graviorque sopore  
coeperat attritu florum descendere cervix.

solus de numero fratrum qui pulchrior ille est 50  
deerat Amor, dum festa parat celeberrima Gallis,

quae socer Ommatius, magnorum maior avorum  
patriciaeque nepos gentis, natae generoque  
excolit auspiciis faustis. sed fulsit ut ille

forte dies, matrem celeri petit ipse volatu, 55  
cui fax, arcus, gorytus pendeat. at ille

cernuus et laevae pendens in margine palmae  
libratos per inane pedes adverberat alis,  
oscula sic matris carpens somnoque refusae

semisopora levi scalpebat lumina penna. 60  
tum prior his alacer coepit: "nova gaudia porto

felicis praedae, genetrix. calet ille superbus  
Ruricius nostris facibus dulcique veneno  
tactus votivum suspirat corde dolorem.

esset si praesens aetas, impenderet illi 65  
Lemnias imperium, Cressa stamen labyrinthi,

Alceste vitam, Circe herbas, poma Calypso,  
Scylla comas, Atalanta pedes, Medea furores,

---

<sup>1</sup> "as . . . wakefulness." L. C. Purser's rendering. The context seems to show that this is the meaning, although, curiously enough, *somno refusa* might also mean "sinking back in sleep": cf. Lucan VIII. 105, *refusa coniugis in gremium*.

<sup>2</sup> Hypsipyle.

<sup>3</sup> The form *Alceste* occurs also in 15. 165. The only other certain instance is in an inscription (C. I. L. VI. 34964), where it does not refer to the mythological character.

<sup>4</sup> Scylla was the daughter of Nisus, king of Megara. He had one red lock in his hair, and on its preservation depended his life and fortune. When Minos was besieging Megara, Scylla, who had fallen in love with him, severed her father's

## XI. EPITHALAMIUM

foot, swaying with the motion, slipping on their dripping soles and steadying their steps with their wings.

Venus had let her soft cheek rest upon her bended arm; the violets about her grew languid and her neck had begun to sink, ever heavier with slumber as the flowers pressed against her. Of all the troop of brothers one alone was missing, the Love-god, the fairest of them all; for he was contriving a glorious marriage-feast for the Gauls, a feast that the bride's father Ommatius, scion of a patrician race and the greatest of his great line, was gracing with splendour for his daughter and her bridegroom amid happy auguries. But when in due course the great day dawned, then the god with swift flight sought his mother, with torch, bow, and quiver slung upon him. Stooping down and resting on the edge of his left hand, with his wings he lashed his feet, as they hung poised in the air, and thus he snatched kisses from his mother; and as she floated back into wakefulness <sup>1</sup> he began to graze her half-slumbering eyes with the light touch of a feather. Then before she could speak he briskly addressed her thus: "I bring you a new joy, Mother, the joy of a happy capture. That proud Ruricius is set aflame by our torch; he has caught the sweet poison and heaves sighs of welcome pain. If those olden times were now, the maid of Lemnos <sup>2</sup> would have lavished on him her sovereignty, the Cretan maid the thread for the labyrinth, Alcestis <sup>3</sup> her life, Circe her magic herbs, Calypso her apples, Scylla <sup>4</sup> the fatal hair, Atalanta her swift feet, Medea her mad passions,

red lock. This story is the subject of the *Ciris*, one of the minor works attributed to Virgil.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Hippodame ceras, cygno Iove nata coronam;  
huic Dido in ferrum, simul in suspendia Phyllis, 70  
Euadne in flammās et Sestias isset in undas."

His haec illa refert: "Gaudemus, nate, rebellem  
quod vincis laudasque virum; sed forma puellae est  
quam si spectasset quondam Sthenoboeius heros,  
non pro contemptu domuisset monstra Chimaerae; 75  
Thermodontiaca vel qui genetrice superbus  
sprevit Gnosiaca temeraria vota novercae,  
hac visa occiderat, fateor, sed crimine vero;  
et si iudicio forsan mihi quarta fuisset,  
me quoque Rhoetea damnasset pastor in Ida; 80  
'vincere vel, si optas, istam da, malo, puellam'  
dixerat: hanc dederam formam pro munere formae.  
tantus honor geniusque genis; collata rubori  
pallida blatta latet depressaque lumine vultus  
nigrescunt vincto bacarum fulgura collo. 85  
te quoque multimodis ambisset, Hiberia, ludis  
axe Pelops, cursu Hippomenes luctaque Achelous,  
Aeneas bellis spectatus, Gorgone Perseus;  
nec minus haec species totiens cui Iuppiter esset

81. *dist. ego*: vincere *passivum est*.

89. minus *ego*: minor. *Vid. Class. Quart., loc. cit., p. 20.*

<sup>1</sup> Hippodamia: for *ceras* cf. 2. 492.

<sup>2</sup> Helen crowned Menelaus with a garland to signify that she had chosen him from among her many suitors. Hygin. *Fab.* 78.

<sup>3</sup> Phyllis, daughter of a Thracian king, hanged herself when Demophon, who had promised to return from Athens and marry her, did not appear on the appointed day.

<sup>4</sup> When her husband Capaneus had been killed in the assault of the "Seven" upon Thebes, she leaped into the flames of his pyre.

<sup>5</sup> Hero threw herself into the sea after the death of Leander.

<sup>6</sup> Bellerophon: see 5. 178.

## XI. EPITHALAMIUM

Hippodame<sup>1</sup> her wax, Jupiter's swan-daughter her crown<sup>2</sup>; for him Dido would have rushed upon the sword, Phyllis to the halter,<sup>3</sup> Evadne into the flames,<sup>4</sup> the maid of Sestos into the waves."<sup>5</sup>

His mother answered: "I rejoice, my son, that thou dost both vanquish and praise that stubborn resister. But the maid's beauty is such that if the hero whom Sthenoboea loved in bygone days<sup>6</sup> had beheld her he would not have had to overcome the dread Chimaera through slighting her charms; he who, arrogantly proud of his Amazon mother,<sup>7</sup> spurned the reckless prayers of his Cretan stepmother, would, if he had seen the maid, have been doomed indeed, but on a true charge; nay, if she had chanced to contend with me as a fourth competitor in the trial of beauty, then the shepherd on Rhoeteian Ida would have given his verdict even against me. 'Lose the contest,' he would have said to me, 'or, if thou chooseth (and this I prefer), give the girl to me;' and I should have given him all that beauty in return for the prize of beauty. Such are the charm and comeliness of her cheeks that compared with their radiance the purple pales into nothingness, and the gleam of the pearls that encircle her neck is dimmed to darkness by the light of her countenance. <sup>8</sup> Her also would men have wooed by all manner of exploits, Pelops attesting his prowess by his chariot, Hippomenes<sup>9</sup> by running, Achelous by wrestling, Aeneas by wars, Perseus by the Gorgon. Yea, hers is the beauty for whose sake Jupiter would so oft have

<sup>7</sup> Hippolytus was the son of Theseus and Hippolyte, queen of the Amazons.

<sup>8</sup> The following passage is discussed in *Class. Quart.* XXVIII (1934), p. 20.

<sup>9</sup> See 5. 165-176, 14. 13-15.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Delia, taurus, olor, Satyrus, draco, fulmen et  
aurum. 90

quare age, iungantur; nam census, forma genusque  
conveniunt: nil hic dispar tua fixit harundo.  
sed quid vota moror? "dixit currumque poposeit,  
cui dederant crystalla iugum, quae frigore primo,  
orbis adhuc teneri glacies ubi Caucason auget, 95  
strinxit Hyperboreis Tanaitica crusta pruinis  
naturam sumens gemmae quia perdidit undae.  
perforat hunc fulvo formatus temo metallo;  
miserat hoc fluvius cuius sub gurgite Nymphae  
Mygdonium fovere Midam, qui pauper in auro 100  
ditavit versis Pactoli flumina votis.  
splendet perspicuo radios rota margine cingens  
Marmaricae de fauce ferae, dum belua curvis  
dentibus excussis gemit exarmarier ora;  
misit et hoc munus tepidas qui nudus Erythras, 105  
concolor Aethiopi vel crinem pinguis amomo,  
fluxus odoratis vexat venatibus Indus.  
illa tamen pasci suetos per Cypron olores  
vittata stringit myrto, quis cetera tensis  
lactea puniceo sinuantur colla corallo. 110

98. hunc (sc. currum) *Mohr*: hanc. *codd.* Fortasse legendum  
est hoc (sc. iugum: cf. 22. 24) et in sequenti versu hunc (sc.  
temonem), ut me monuit *W. H. Semple*.

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. Diana. Jupiter assumed this form in order to deceive  
Cynosura. The victims of the other disguises mentioned  
were (in order) Europa, Leda, Antiope, Mnemosyne (Proser-  
pina, according to the usual account, but see 15. 175 sq.),  
Semele, Danae. See 15. 174-178. According to Ovid,  
*Met.* VI. 113, in the case of Mnemosyne the appearance  
assumed was that of a shepherd.

## XI. EPITHALAMIUM

become the Delian goddess,<sup>1</sup> a bull, a swan, a satyr, a serpent, thunder or gold. So let them be straight-way united, for they are alike in wealth and beauty and lineage; there is naught that is ill-matched in these victims of thy shaft. But why am I thus delaying their marriage?" Thus she spake and called for her chariot. Its yoke was of crystal, which in early winter, when the ice of the young world began to increase the bulk of Caucasus, was compacted of a piece of the Tanais by dint of the northern frosts, assuming the nature of a gem because it lost the nature of water. The car was pierced by a pole of the yellow metal, metal which had been sent by the river beneath whose waters the nymphs fondled Mygdonian Midas, who, poor in the midst of gold, enriched Pactolus' stream when his prayers had been turned against him. Brightly gleamed the wheels, encircling the spokes with translucent rims; they were got from the jaws of the Libyan beast, while the monster bewailed the disarming of his mouth with the tusks wrenched away. This also was a gift, sent by the Indian, a man like the Ethiopian in hue and with the grease of unguent on his hair, who troubles warm Erythrae<sup>2</sup> as he roams about naked in his fragrant hunting.<sup>3</sup> Her swans, wont to feed in Cyprus, Venus held firmly with reins of be-ribboned myrtle; the rest of their bodies was tense and taut, but their milk-white necks were bent by a circlet of red coral.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See 2. 447 n. Here a district rather than a town seems to be indicated.

<sup>3</sup> "Fragrant hunting" refers to the fragrance cast from his perfumed hair as he hunts.

<sup>4</sup> This seems to mean that the reins are attached to a coral necklet, and the neck is bent back when they are pulled.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Ergo iter aggressi: pendens rota sulcat inanem  
 aera et in liquido non solvitur orbita tractu.  
 hic triplex uno comitatur Gratia nexu,  
 hic redolet patulo Fortunae Copia cornu,  
 hic spargit calathis, sed flores Flora perennes,      115  
 hic Cererem Siculam Pharius comitatur Osiris,  
 hic gravidos Pomona sinus pro tempore portat,  
 hic Pallas madidis venit inter prela trapetis,  
 hic distincta latus maculosa nebride Thyias  
 Indica Echionio Bromii rotat orgia thyrsos,      120  
 hic et Sigeis specubus qui Dindyma ludit  
 iam sectus recalet Corybas; cui gutture ravo  
 ignem per bifores regemunt cava buxa cavernas.

Sic ventum ad thalamos: tus, nardum, balsama,  
 myrrhae

hic sunt, hic Phoenix busti dat cinnama vivi.      125  
 proxima quin etiam festorum adflata calore  
 iam minus alget hiemps, speciemque tenentia vernam  
 hoc dant vota loco quod non dant tempora mundo.  
 tum Paphie dextram iuvenis dextramque puellae  
 complectens paucis cecinit sollemnia dictis,      130  
 ne facerent vel verba moram: "feliciter aevum  
 ducite concordēs; sint nati sintque nepotes;  
 cernat et in proavo sibimet quod pronepos optet."



## XI. EPITHALAMIUM

So they begin their journey: the poised wheel cleaves the empty air, leaving in the clear expanse no rut to be smoothed out. Here the three Graces attend her, linked in a single embrace; here Plenty casts fragrance from Fortune's open horn; here Flora scatters flowers from baskets, flowers ever blooming; here Egyptian Osiris accompanies Sicilian Ceres; here Pomona carries the folds of her robe loaded with the fruits of the season; here Pallas comes with oil-mills that are oozing between the presses; here the Bacchanal, her side mottled with a dappled fawn-skin, plies the whirling Indian revelry of Bromius with the Theban thyrsus; here the Corybant too, who represents the rites of Dindyma in the caves of Sigeum, unmanned though he now is, feels the old glow return, and from that hoarse throat the hollowed box-wood groans out through its double pipe the fire that is within him.

Thus they come to the bridal; incense, nard, balm, and myrrh are here; here Phoenix presents the cinnamon of his living pyre.<sup>1</sup> Nay, even the winter so near at hand has felt the warm breath of the festival and has grown less cold, and the wedding preserves a suggestion of spring and gives to that spot a boon which the seasons do not give to the world. Then the goddess of Paphos, clasping the right hands of man and maid, chanted the hallowed blessing in but few words, unwilling that even words should bring delay: "Pass your lives in happiness and concord; may ye have children and grandchildren; and may your great-grandchildren see in their great-grandparents the bliss which they themselves would fain enjoy!"

<sup>1</sup> See 2. 417 n.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

## XII

### AD V. C. CATVLLINVM

Quid me, etsi valeam, parare carmen  
 Fescenninicolae iubes Diones  
 inter crinigeras situm catervas  
 et Germanica verba sustinentem,  
 laudantem tetrico subinde vultu 5  
 quod Burgundio cantat esculentus,  
 infundens acido comam butyro?  
 vis dicam tibi, quid poema frangat?  
 ex hoc barbaricis abacta plectris  
 spernit senipedem stilum Thalia, 10  
 ex quo septipedes videt patronos.  
 felices oculos tuos et aures  
 felicemque libet vocare nasum,  
 cui non allia sordidumque cepe  
 ructant mane novo decem apparatus, 15  
 quem non ut vetulum patris parentem  
 nutricisque virum die nec orto  
 tot tantique petunt simul Gigantes,  
 quot vix Alcinoi culina ferret.  
 Sed iam Musa tacet tenetque habenas 20  
 paucis hendecasyllabis iocata,  
 ne quisquam satiram vel hos vocaret.

14. sordidumque cepe *ego*: sordidaeque caepae (sepe *F*)  
*codd.*; *sed desideratur accusativus.*

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<sup>1</sup> Catullinus, who appears to have asked Sidonius to write an epithalamium, is mentioned in *Epist.* I. 11. 3 sq., but is not otherwise known. In that letter, which has reference to a supposed "satire" of Sidonius, Catullinus plays an amusing part, and it is fairly obvious that *v.* 22 contains a reference to the incident, which occurred at Arles in A.D. 461. The

## XII. TO CATULLINUS

### XII

#### TO CATULLINUS, SENATOR<sup>1</sup>

Why—even supposing I had the skill—do you bid me compose a song dedicated to Venus the lover of Fescennine mirth, placed as I am among long-haired hordes, having to endure German speech, praising oft with wry face the song of the gluttonous Burgundian who spreads rancid butter on his hair? Do you want me to tell you what wrecks all poetry? Driven away by barbarian thrumming the Muse has spurned the six-footed exercise ever since she beheld these patrons seven feet high. I am fain to call your eyes and ears happy, happy too your nose, for you don't have a reek of garlic and foul onions discharged upon you at early morn from ten breakfasts, and you are not invaded even before dawn, like an old grandfather or a foster-father, by a crowd of giants so many and so big that not even the kitchen of Alcinous could support them.

But already my Muse is silent and draws rein after only a few jesting hendecasyllables, lest anyone should call even these lines satire.

poem may have been written at Arles some time after Catullinus had left. The reference to the Burgundians is not quite clear. Sidonius seems to imply that he was responsible for feeding a certain number of them. Were they members of a Burgundian contingent in the forces of Majorian? Hodgkin (II. 362), though adopting the above view of v. 21 and the consequent dating of the poem, conjectures that these verses were written at Lyons—presumably because Lyons was in (though not part of) the Burgundian territory; but he does not explain the reference to the Burgundian meals. For an account of various suggested dates and places see Stevens, p. 66, n. 1. For the superscription of this poem see n. on *Epist.* I. 11. 3.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

## XIII

### AD IMPERATOREM MAIORIANVM

Amphitryoniaden perhibet veneranda vetustas,  
 dum relevat terras, promeruisse polos.  
 sed licet in nuda torvus confregerit ulna  
 ille Cleonaeae guttura rava ferae,  
 et quamquam ardenti gladio vix straverit hydram, 5  
 cum duplices pareret vulnere mors animas,  
 captivumque ferens silva ex Erymanthide monstrum  
 exarmata feri riserit ora suis,  
 collaque flammigenae dirumpens fumida furis  
 tandem directas iusserit ire boves, 10  
 taurus, cerva, Gigas, hospes, luctator, Amazon,  
 Cres, canis, Hesperides sint monimenta viri,  
 nulla tamen fuso prior est Geryone pugna,  
 uni tergeminum cui tulit ille caput.  
 haec quondam Alcides; at tu Tiryntius alter, 15  
 sed princeps, magni maxima cura dei,  
 quem draco, cervus, aper paribus sensere sagittis,  
 cum dens, cum virus, cum fuga nil valuit,  
 Eurysthea nos esse puta monstrumque tributum;  
 hinc capita, ut vivam, tu mihi tolle tria. 20

3. sed *Mohr*: et.

19. Eurysthea ego: hystriones (histr.). *Vid. Class. Quart. loc. cit. p. 20.*

20. hinc *Luetjohann*: hic.

<sup>1</sup> Majorian had punished the rebellious Gallo-Romans in Lyons by levying a heavy tax. The method adopted was apparently to assess each man on an increased number of *capita* (property-units on which taxation was calculated). The "three heads" in this poem seem to mean that the taxes were trebled; or they may even have been quadrupled by the addition of three *capita* to every former one. Sidonius here pleads for a remission on behalf of himself and (less obviously) of others. His appeal was probably successful, otherwise he

### XIII. TO MAJORIAN

#### XIII

#### TO THE EMPEROR MAJORIAN<sup>1</sup>

Hallowed antiquity records that the son of Amphitryon by succouring earth earned heaven as his reward. But although with grim look he crushed within his bare arms the tawny<sup>2</sup> throat of the monster of Cleonae; although with his fiery sword he just availed to lay the hydra low, as one death ever brought forth two lives from the wound; although he carried the captured monster from the Erymanthian forest, laughing at the wild boar's disarmed mouth; and although, bursting open the smoking neck of the fire-born thief, he compelled the cows at last to go frontwise; although the bull, the deer, the giant, the host, the wrestler, the Amazon, the Cretan beast, the dog, and the Hesperides<sup>3</sup> are memorials of the hero's prowess—yet none of his fights takes rank before the overthrow of Geryon, from whose one body he took three heads. Thus Alcides of old; but do thou, as a second Hercules, and our sovereign to boot, and our great God's greatest care—thou, whose arrows made snake, stag, and boar alike to feel thy prowess,<sup>4</sup> when tooth, poison, and flight availed them not—deem us to be Eurystheus<sup>5</sup> and the tax to be the monster, and favour me by taking from it three heads, that I may be able to live.

would scarcely have included it in his collected poems. It was probably written very soon after the Panegyric.

<sup>2</sup> This is probably the meaning of *rava* here. There is another word *raucus*, meaning "hoarse," "rough-voiced" (= *raucus*): see *Epist.* VIII. 11. 3 *carm.* 49; *ib.* IX. 2. 2. The meaning of the word in Horace is disputed; see commentators on *C.* III. 27. 3, *Epod.* XVI. 33, and G. Ramain in *Revue de Philologie Sér.* III. T. IX (1935), pp. 358-360.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 9. 95-98 n. <sup>4</sup> For this exploit of Majorian see 5. 153 sq.

<sup>5</sup> The king who ordered the labours of Hercules.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Has supplex famulus preces dicavit  
responsum opperiens pium ac salubre.  
ut reddas patriam simulque vitam  
Lugdunum exonerans suis ruinis,  
hoc te Sidonius tuus precatur: 25  
sic te Sidonio recocta fuco  
multos purpura vestiat per annos;  
sic lustro imperii perennis acto  
quinguennalia fascibus dicentur;  
sic ripae duplicis tumore fracto 30  
detonsus Vachalim bibat Sygamber.  
quod si contuleris tuo poetae,  
mandem perpetuis legenda fastis  
quaecumque egregiis geris triumphis.  
nam nunc Musa loquax tacet tributo, 35  
quae pro Vergilio Terentioque  
sextantes legit unciasque fisci,  
Marsyaeque timet manum ac rudentem,  
qui Phoebi ex odio vetustiore  
nunc suspendia vatibus minatur. 40

### XIV

#### SIDONIUS POLEMIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Dum post profectionem tuam, mi Polemi, frater  
amantissime, mecum granditer reputo quatenus in  
votis tuis philosophi Fescennina cantarem, obrepsit

---

<sup>1</sup> *mandem*, a good instance of present subjunctive for future indicative. There are several examples of this in Sidonius.

<sup>2</sup> A reference not only to the well-known legend of Apollo and Marsyas, but to Marsyas as symbolising the law (from the statue of Marsyas in the Roman Forum near the law-courts).

#### XIV. SIDONIUS TO POLEMIUS

This petition thy suppliant servant has offered, waiting for a kind and life-giving answer. That thou mayest give him back his native town and his life withal, releasing Lugdunum from its fallen estate—this thy Sidonius craves of thee: so may the purple, redipped in Sidonian dye, clothe thee for many a year; so, when thou hast completed a lustre of thine everlasting reign, may a quinquennial festival be consecrated to thy rule; so may the Sygambrian, when the commotion on both banks has been quelled, drink the waters of Vachalis with head shorn in humiliation. If thou grant this to thy poet, I will commit<sup>1</sup> to history's undying records, to be read of mankind, all the exploits of thy glorious triumphs. For now my talkative muse is silenced by the tax, and culls instead of Virgil's and Terence's lines the pence and halfpence owed to the Exchequer, and fears the hand and rope of Marsyas,<sup>2</sup> who from his old-time hatred of Phoebus now threatens bards with hanging.

#### XIV

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND POLEMIUS,<sup>3</sup> GREETING

##### 1. My devoted brother Polemius,

After your departure I considered carefully how far I was entitled to sing a Fescennine strain in celebrating the wedding of a philosopher like you.

<sup>3</sup> Polemius, a descendant of the historian Tacitus, became Praetorian Prefect of Gaul (perhaps A.D. 471-2, less probably after 475: see Stevens, p. 197), and held office for two years. See *Epist.* IV. 14, which is addressed to him.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

materia, qua decursa facile dinosci valet magis me doctrinae quam causae tuae habuisse rationem. omissa itaque epithalamii teneritudine per asperimas philosophiae et salebrosissimas regulas<sup>1</sup> stilum traxi; quarum talis ordo est ut sine plurimis novis verbis, quae praefata pace reliquorum eloquentum specialiter tibi et Complatonicis tuis nota sunt, nugae ipsae non valuerint expediri. 2. videris, utrum aures quorundam per imperitiam temere mentionem centri, proportionis, diastematum, climatum vel myrarum epithalamio conducibilem non putent. illud certe consulari viro vere Magno, quaestorio viro Domnulo, spectabili viro Leone ducibus audacter adfirmo, musicam et astrologiam, quae sunt infra arithmeticam consequentia membra philosophiae, nullatenus posse sine hisce nominibus indicari; quae si quispiam ut Graeca, sicut sunt, et peregrina verba contempserit, noverit sibi aut semper<sup>2</sup> huiusmodi artis mentione supersedendum aut nihil omnino se aut certe non ad assem Latiori lingua hinc posse disserere. 3. quod si aliqui<sup>3</sup> secus atque assero rem se habere censuerint, do quidem absens obtrectatoribus manus; sed noverint sententiam meam discrepantia sentientes sine Marco

<sup>1</sup> regiunculas *Stangl*, regiones *Buecheler*.

<sup>2</sup> semper *Buecheler*: super.

<sup>3</sup> aliqui . . . censuerint *ego*: aliquis . . . censuerit.

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<sup>1</sup> Magnus: 23. 455 n. Domnulus: 5. 570 n. Leo: 9. 314 n. The *spectabiles* ranked between the *inlustres* and



#### XIV. SIDONIUS TO POLEMIUS

The subject of the poem then crept into my mind, and now that it is completed it is easily seen that I have taken more notice of your learning than of the happy occasion. Thus I have abandoned the melting tones of the nuptial song and trailed my pen over the roughest and most stony teachings of philosophy, which are so constituted that even a trifling effort like this could not have been accomplished without a large number of the new words which (with apologies to all other stylists) are known in a special degree to you and your fellow-Platonists. 2. You shall judge whether certain persons' ears, owing to inexperience, imagine too hastily that the mention of "centrum," "proportio," "diastemata," "climata," "myrae," is unsuited to a marriage-poem. This at least I confidently affirm, following the lead of Magnus, a consular and a man as great as his name, Domnulus, of quaestorian rank, and the Eminent Leo,<sup>1</sup> that music and astronomy, the branches of philosophy which come next in importance to arithmetic, cannot in the least be made intelligible without these terms; and if anyone look down on them, as being Greek and foreign expressions (which they are), let him be assured that he must for ever renounce all mention of this sort of science or else that he cannot treat the subject at all, or at least that he cannot treat it completely, in the Latin tongue. 3. Should some people maintain that the facts are not as I declare them to be, I surrender to those cavillers whom I cannot meet face to face; nevertheless, I would have all who differ from me know that my opinion cannot be condemned without condemning Marcus Varro,

the *clarissimi* in the official hierarchy. See Hodgkin I, 603, 620, Bury I. 19.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Varrone, sine Sereno, non Septimio, sed Sammonico, sine Censorino, qui de die natali volumen illustre confecit, non posse damnari. 4. lecturus es hic etiam novum verbum, id est *essentiam*; sed scias hoc ipsum dixisse Ciceronem; nam *essentiam* nec non et *indoloriam* nominavit, addens: "licet enim novis rebus nova nomina imponere"; et recte dixit. nam sicut ab eo quod est verbi gratia sapere et intellegere sapientiam et intellegentiam nominamus, regulariter et ab eo quod est esse *essentiam* non tacemus. igitur, quoniam tui amoris studio inductus homo Gallus scholae sophisticæ intromisi materiam, vel te potissimum facti mei deprecatorem requiro. illi Venus vel Amorum commenticia pigmenta tribuantur cui defuerit sic posse laudari. vale.

### PRAEFATIO EPITHALAMII DICTI POLEMIO ET ARANEOLAE

Prosper conubio dies coruscat,  
quem Clotho niveis benigna pensis,

---

<sup>1</sup> See 9. 267. The Serenus Sammonicus here referred to is the elder of that name, a very learned man, who was put to death by Caracalla. His son was a poet, and is usually identified with Quintus (or Quintius? See Vollmer's ed., p. 3) Serenus, the author of a still extant medical treatise in verse.

<sup>2</sup> Seneca (*Epist.* 58. 6) confirms Sidonius about *essentia*; but the word is not found in any extant work of Cicero. According to Quintilian (II. 14. 2, III. 6. 23, VIII. 3. 33)

#### XIV. PREFACE TO EPITHALAMIUM

Serenus (Sammonicus, not Septimius<sup>1</sup>), and Censorinus, the author of a fine book "On the natal Day." 4. Here also you are going to read a novel word, *essentia*; but you must note that Cicero himself has used that word; for he introduced the two terms *essentia* and *indoloria*,<sup>2</sup> adding: "for it is allowable to apply new names to new notions." And he was quite right, for just as we form, for example, the nouns *sapientia* and *intellegentia* from *sapere* and *intellegere*, so quite legitimately we do not refrain from using *essentia* from *esse*. Therefore, since my interest in your love-affair has led me, a man of Gaul, to introduce such matter as belongs to the philosophical lecture-room, I claim you in a special degree as intercessor on my behalf. Let Venus and all the fictitious gallery of love-gods be bestowed on one who cannot be eulogised in the manner of this poem. Farewell.

#### PREFACE TO THE EPITHALAMIUM ADDRESSED TO POLEMIUS AND ARANEOLA<sup>3</sup>

Auspicious for the marriage gleams the day, a day for a kindly Clotho to distinguish with snow-  
*essentia* (a translation of *οὐσία*, "being") was first used by a philosopher called Plautus (this seems to be the correct form, but the MSS. vary). Cicero uses *indolentia*, but it is scarcely credible that he ever used *indoloria*. Both these words are renderings of the Greek word *ἀναισθησία*, "insensibility," literally "freedom from pain." The form *indoloria* is used by Jerome and Augustine.

<sup>3</sup> For Araneola see n. on 9. 6.



#### XIV. PREFACE TO EPITHALAMIUM

white thread, a day to be marked by the white stone of the black Indian<sup>1</sup> and by the olive ever fresh and green, tree at once of peace and of youth. Ho, Calliope! With thy radiant hand deliver to me the eloquence of the sacred spring which Pegasus dug out with his flying foot when his mane was wet with his mother's poison. Here there is no unnatural enmity; this girl is not being bestowed through the deaths of rival suitors. Here no Pelops listens to the bloody terms of Oenomaus<sup>2</sup> in the racing-ground; no Hippomenes<sup>3</sup> pale with dread at the lower turning-point of the course retards the maid of Schoenus with thrice-falling apple; not here does Calydon behold in amazement from her Aetolian height the wrestling of Hercules, when he forced down the horn of the arrogant river, refreshing his breast ever and anon from his watery foe.<sup>4</sup> Nay, a learned young scholar and a comely maid, holding by right of birth the most exalted eminence in Gaul, are being united. Quick, goddess, string the lyre, nor compel my poor talent to keep silence because a greater Muse<sup>5</sup> hath sent forth thundering strains. At the marriage of Thetis, with Apollo's approval, even Chiron made music with lesser quill, nor did the kindly company laugh at his rustic style, although oft the aged double-formed creature broke his song with a whinnying note.<sup>6</sup>

imitates, the stones become pearls (*Indicis lapillis* I. 109. 4, cf. X. 38. 5; see also VIII. 45. 2, XI. 36. 1).

<sup>2</sup> See 2. 491 n.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 2. 494-496, 5. 167-176, 11. 87.

<sup>4</sup> See 2. 497-499 n.

<sup>5</sup> The identity of this "greater Muse" is unknown.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. I. 19 sq.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

## XV

### EPITHALAMIVM

Forte procellosi remeans ex arce Capherci,  
 Phoebados Iliacae raptum satis ulta pudorem,  
 Pallas Erechtheo Xanthum mutabat Hymetto.  
 aurato micat aere caput, maiusque serenum  
 de terrore capit; posito nam fulmine necdum 5  
 Cinyphio Tritone truces hilaraverat artus.  
 Gorgo tenet pectus medium, factura videnti  
 et truncata moras; nitet insidiosa superbum  
 effigies vivitque anima pereunte venustas;  
 alta cerastarum spiris caput asperat atrum 10  
 congeries, torquet maculosa volumina mordax  
 crinis, et irati dant sibila taetra capilli.  
 squameus ad mediam thorax non pervenit alvum  
 post chalybem pendente peplo; tegit extima limbi  
 circite palla pedes, qui cum sub veste moventur, 15  
 crispato rigidae crepitant in syrmate rugae.  
 laevam parma tegit Phlegraei plena tumultus:  
 hic rotat excussum vibrans in sidera Pindum  
 Enceladus, rabido fit missilis Ossa Typhoeo;  
 Porphyryon Pangaea rapit, Rhodopenque Damastor  
 Strymonio cum fonte levat, veniensque superne 21  
 intorto calidum restinguit flumine fulmen;  
 hic Pallas Pallanta petit, cui Gorgone visa

19. rabido *Mohr et Luetjohann* : rapido.

<sup>1</sup> See 5. 196 n.

<sup>2</sup> Tritonis (palus) was a lake in N. Africa, now impossible to identify with certainty. It was near the Lesser Syrtes, with which it seems to have been united by a river, also called Tritonis. The lake is often associated with Pallas Athena, who is called *Τριτογένεια*, Tritonia, and Tritonis (see 7. 198 and below, v. 179). One legend made her a daughter of the lake-nymph, another said that she was born on the shores of the lake.

## XV. EPITHALAMIUM

### XV

#### EPITHALAMIUM

It chanced that Pallas was returning from the peak of storm-swept Caphereus<sup>1</sup>; she had avenged to the full the ravished honour of Apollo's Trojan votary, and now she was abandoning Xanthus for Athenian Hymettus. Her head sparkles with gilded bronze, and she begins to show a more serene aspect after her frightfulness; for she has laid aside the thunderbolt, though she has not yet gladdened her fierce limbs with the waters of African Tritonis.<sup>2</sup> The Gorgon covers the middle of her breast, with power still to make the beholder motionless, though the head be severed. Proudly shines that guileful form, and its beauty still lives though life is ebbing. The dark head bristles with a towering swarm of twisting vipers; those fanged tresses tangle their spotted coils, those angry locks utter horrible hisses. The corselet of scale-armour worn by the goddess reaches not to the waist; where the steel ceases her robe hangs down; the end of her cloak covers her feet with its circling hem, and when they move under her raiment there is a rustling of the stiff folds in the crimped trailing mantle. Her left hand is covered by a shield filled with a likeness of the Phlegræan fray. In one part Enceladus brandishes Pindus, torn from its base, and sends it whirling to the stars, while Ossa is the missile of frenzied Typhoeus; Porphyryion snatches up Pangæus, Damastor lifts up Rhodope along with Strymon's spring, and when the glowing thunderbolt comes down he hurls the river at it and quenches it. In another part Pallas assails Pallas, but he has seen the Gorgon, and her spear is

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invenit solidum iam lancea tarda cadaver;  
 hic Lemnon pro fratre Mimas contra aegida  
     torquet, 25  
 impulsumque quatit iaculabilis insula caelum;  
 plurimus hic Briareus populo corpore pugnat,  
 cognatam portans aciem, cui vertice ab uno  
 cernas ramosis palmas fruticare lacertis.  
 nec species solas monstris, dedit arte furorem 30  
 Mulciber atque ipsas timuit quas finxerat iras.  
 hastam dextra tenet, nuper quam valle Aracynthi  
 ipsa sibi posita Pallas protraxit oliva.  
 hoc steterat genio, super ut vestigia divae  
 labentes teneat Marathonia baca trapetas. 35  
 Hic duo templa micant; quorum supereminet unus  
 ut meritis sic sede locus, qui continet alta  
 scrutantes ratione viros quid machina caeli,  
 quid tellus, quid fossa maris, quid turbidus aer,  
 quid noctis lucisque vices, quid menstrua lunae 40  
 incrementa parent, totidem cur damna sequantur.

<sup>1</sup> Pallas Athena is elsewhere said to have flayed Pallas the giant. See Apollodorus I. 6. 2 with Sir J. G. Frazer's note (vol. I. p. 46 n. 1 in this series).

<sup>2</sup> The digression on the shield ends here. Failure to notice this has led to serious misunderstanding of the next four lines, although Sidonius has taken pains to make things clear: *hastam dextra tenet* is contrasted with *laevam parma tegit* (v. 17).

<sup>3</sup> M. Aracynthus was in Aetolia, but Sidonius seems to follow Virgil in placing it on the borders of Attica and Boeotia: see Conington (ed. 5) and Page on Virgil, *Ec.* II. 24.

<sup>4</sup> The olive.

<sup>5</sup> The poet imagines a site in or near Athens (the Acropolis?) where there are two adjoining temples consecrated to Pallas Athena, goddess of wisdom and of arts and crafts. The first temple is a home of philosophy, where Polemius learns all the doctrines of the sages; the second (described in vv. 126 sqq.)



## XV. EPITHALAMIUM

already too late, and encounters a solid corpse.<sup>1</sup> Elsewhere is seen Mimas flinging Lemnos against the aegis in a brother's defence, while the island-missile shakes heaven with its impact. In yet another part is the multiple Briareus with his much-peopled body joining in the fray, carrying in his person a whole host all akin; you could see his hands on branching arms sprouting from a single source. To these monsters Vulcan had given by his skill not only forms but frenzy, so that he trembled at the very wrath which his art had counterfeited.<sup>2</sup> The right hand of Pallas held a spear, which she herself had lately plucked in the vale of Aracynthus<sup>3</sup> from an olive she had planted. Arrayed in all this glory she had now alighted, and where the feet of the goddess rested there arose the Marathonian berry<sup>4</sup> to take possession of the gliding mills.

Here two temples<sup>5</sup> gleam forth, both in the same region, a region exalted alike in situation and in achievements, for it contains the men who by thought profound inquire what the fabric of the sky, the earth, the sunken sea, the tempestuous air, the alternations of day and night, and the monthly waxing of the moon bring to pass, and why the waxing is ever followed by

is devoted to the textile arts, and there Araneola sits, doing wonderful embroidery. Her subjects are mostly taken from the love-stories of mythology. The goddess indicates that she prefers the subjects which are cultivated in the other temple; whereupon Araneola mischievously begins to depict a philosopher (Diogenes the Cynic) in a ridiculous situation. The goddess, unable to restrain a smile, says, "You are not going to laugh at philosophers any longer; you are going to marry one." For an ingenious but unconvincing attempt to identify and locate the two "temples" see A. von Premerstein in *Jahresh. d. österr. arch. Inst.* XV (1912), pp. 28-35. He seriously misunderstands vv. 36 f.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

ilicet hic summi resident septem sapientes,  
 innumerabilium primordia philosophorum:  
 Thales Mileto genitus vadimonia damnat;  
 Lindie tu Cleobule iubes modus optimus ut sit; 45  
 tu meditans totum decoras, Periandre, Corinthon;  
 Atticus inde Solon "ne quid nimis" approbat unum;  
 Prienaee Bia, plures ais esse malignos;  
 tu Mytilene satus cognoscere, Pittace, tempus,  
 noscere sese ipsum, Chilon Spartane, docebas; 50  
 asserit hic Samius post docta silentia lustrī  
 Pythagoras solidum princeps quod musica mundum  
 temperet et certis concentum reddat ab astris,  
 signaque zodiacus quae circulus axe supremo  
 terna quater retinet proprio non currere motu, 55  
 aequis inter se spatiis tamen esse locata  
 fixaque signifero pariter quoque cernua ferri,  
 praecipuumque etiam septem vaga sidera cantum  
 hinc dare, perfectus numerus quod uterque habeatur,  
 hoc numero adfirmans, hoc ordine cuncta rotari: 60  
 falciferi zonam ire senis per summa polorum,  
 Martis contiguum medio Iove pergere sidus,  
 post hos iam quarto se flectere tramite Solem,  
 sic placidam Paphien servare diastema quintum,  
 Arcadium sextum, Lunam sic orbe supremo 65

59. utique *P* fortasse ex utrimque ortum: *vid. Class. Quart. loc. cit. p. 21.* 61. zonam *Mohr*: c(h)ronon.

65. sextum *ego*: sexto; *vid. Class. Quart. ib.*

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the waning. Here, then, are enthroned the Seven Sages, the sources of numberless philosophers.<sup>1</sup> Thales of Miletus condemns the giving of sureties; Cleobulus of Lindus bids moderation be our ideal; Periander glorifies Corinth as he practises everything; then Solon of Athens approves above all the saying, "Nothing to excess"; Bias of Priene says that the evil-hearted are the majority; Pittacus, that son of Mitylene, taught this lesson—to mark the opportune time, and Spartan Chilo to know oneself. Here the Samian Pythagoras declares, after a philosophic silence of five years, that music is the prime regulator of the universe and gives it a harmony from the unvarying movement of the stars, and that the thrice four signs that the Zodiac-belt holds in high heaven run not on with their own separate motion, but are placed at equal intervals one from another and, being fixed in the sign-bearing belt, are borne with it in descending movement; also that the seven wandering stars give forth the finest music because in planets and notes alike a perfect number is present. He says that by this number the universe is whirled round, and in this arrangement: the circle of the old Sick-bearer<sup>2</sup> traverses the highest regions of the firmament; next, save that Jupiter comes between, the star of Mars wends its way; after these the Sun winds along the fourth path; in like manner the gentle goddess of Paphos<sup>3</sup> retains the fifth zone, the Arcadian<sup>4</sup> the sixth; and the moon in the last circle

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2. 156 sqq.

<sup>2</sup> Saturn.

<sup>3</sup> Venus.

<sup>4</sup> Mercury: see 1. 7 n.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

ter denas tropico prope currere climate myras.  
 si quos ergo chelys, si quos lyra, tibia si quos  
 ediderint cum voce modos, exemplar ad istud  
 ponderibus positis, quantum proportio suadet,  
 intervalla sequi septeni sideris edit; 70  
 harmoniam dicens etiam quod quattuor istis  
 sic sedeant elementa modis ut pondere magnis  
 sit locus inferior media tellure (quod autem  
 perfecte medium est, imum patet esse rotundi);  
 hinc fieri ut terram levior superemicet unda, 75  
 altior his quoque sit qui purior eminet aer,  
 omnia concludat caelum levitate suprema,  
 pendeat et totum simul hoc ab origine centri.  
 Thales hic etiam numeris perquirat et astris  
 defectum ut Phoebi nec non Lunaque laborem 80  
 nuntiet antierius; sed rebus inutile ponit  
 principium, dum credit aquis subsistere mundum.  
 huius discipuli versa est sententia dicens  
 principiis propriis semper res quasque creari,  
 singula qui quosdam fontes decernit habere 85  
 aeternum irriguos ac rerum semine plenos.

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<sup>1</sup> *Myras* or *moerte* are segments of the zodiacal circle, which extends from tropic to tropic. The sun traverses thirty of these in about a month. Had Sidonius been speaking of the sun there would have been no difficulty; but he seems to be confusing these solar degrees with the (approximately) 30 days of the moon's monthly revolution.

<sup>2</sup> Anaximander; but Sidonius in this passage gives a rough summary of doctrines usually associated with Anaxagoras: the primal chaos contained an infinite number of particles, or "seeds" of things; these became separated off, like becoming united with like (*e.g.* gold particles with gold particles): everything in the world consists predominantly of particles of the same nature as itself (miniatures of itself as it were)—this is the doctrine of *homoiomereia*, as it was called by Aristotle and others. The process of change in individual things is

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runs on through nearly thirty degrees within the clime of the tropics.<sup>1</sup> Thus all the tones that have been given forth by harp and lyre and flute and voice follow, he declares, the intervals of the seven planets, the pitch of the sounds being assigned after this pattern according to the dictates of proportion. He also calls by the name of harmony the arrangement of the four elements, which are so placed that those of great weight have the lowest place in the earth at the centre (It is clear that in a round shape what is absolutely the middle must be the lowest part); hence it comes about that water, which is lighter, springs up above the land, and higher than both is air, which is purer and thus soars over them, while sky, with its extreme lightness, encloses all these, and at the same time this whole universe takes its poise from the centre. In this temple also Thales inquires by calculations concerning the heavenly bodies how to announce beforehand the eclipse of the sun and the travail of the moon; but he assigns to things a vain first principle, believing that the universe is evolved from water. His pupil<sup>2</sup> takes a contrary view; he says that everything is always created from its own peculiar first-beginnings, and he holds that individual entities have, as it were, springs ever flowing and full of the seeds of things.

always going on: by addition or separation something quite different may be produced, owing to the predominance of another type of particle. This may be the meaning of *vv.* 85 sq.; but the language is vague and might be variously interpreted. The ancients often attribute Anaxagorean doctrines to Anaximander, and it is not easy to draw a rigid line between the tenets of the two philosophers; but Anaxagoras seems really to have been more influenced by Anaximenes than by Anaximander.

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hunc etiam sequitur qui gignere cuncta putabat  
 hunc aerem pariterque deos sic autumat ortos.  
 quartus Anaxagoras Thaletica dogmata servat,  
 sed divinum animum sentit, qui fecerit orbem. 90  
 iunior huic iunctus residet collega, sed idem  
 materiam cunctis creaturis aera credens  
 iudicat inde deum, faceret quo cuncta, tulisse.  
 post hos Arcesilas divina mente paratam  
 conicit hanc molem, confectam partibus illis 95  
 quas atomos vocat ipse leves. Socratica post hunc  
 secta micat, quae de naturae pondere migrans  
 ad mores hominum limandos transtulit usum.  
 hanc sectam perhibent summum excoluisse Platona,  
 sed triplici formasse modo, dum primus et unus 100  
 physica vel logico, logicum vel iungit ad ethos.  
 invenit hic princeps quid prima essentia distet  
 a summo sextoque bono: cum denique saxa  
 sint tantum penitusque nihil nisi esse probentur;  
 proxima succedant, quibus esse et vivere promptum  
 est, 105  
 addere quis possis nil amplius, arbor et herba;  
 tertia sit pecorum, quorum esse et vivere motu  
 non caret et sensu; mortales quarta deinde  
 respiciat factura suos, quibus esse, moveri,  
 vivere cum sensu datur, et supereminet illud, 110

88. hunc aerem *def. Brakman.*

104. nisi id, esse *Leo.*

<sup>1</sup> Anaximenes.

<sup>2</sup> It is difficult to guess why Sidonius thought that Anaxagoras upheld the doctrines of Thales.

<sup>3</sup> This seems to refer to Diogenes of Apollonia, but he certainly did not regard God as a creator essentially distinct from the air out of which all else is created.

<sup>4</sup> Arcesilas should be Archelaus.

<sup>5</sup> See n. on 2. 173. There is no reason for attributing this triple division of philosophy to Socrates or Plato. It may have

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He is followed by one<sup>1</sup> who thought that our air produces all things, and who declares that the gods also have a like origin. Fourth in the line is Anaxagoras, who upholds the dogmas of Thales<sup>2</sup> but feels the presence of a divine mind, creator of the world. Next to him sits a younger colleague,<sup>3</sup> but he, believing air to be the substance from which all creatures come, judges that thence God derived the wherewithal to create everything. After them Arcesilas<sup>4</sup> guesses that this great world-mass is produced by a divine mind but is made up of those particles which he himself calls light atoms. After him shines forth the Socratic school, which passed from nature's massive fabric and transferred its practice to enhancing the moral life of mankind. This school they say the peerless Plato adorned, but he moulded it after a triple pattern,<sup>5</sup> being an unmatched pioneer in his joining of physics to logic and logic to ethics. He is the first to discover how great is the distance between the first essence and the sixth and highest good.<sup>6</sup> For stones, he says, do but exist, and are clearly proved to do naught but exist; next come those things which manifestly both exist and live, but to which you could ascribe no further attribute, trees and plants; the third kind of being is found in the beasts, in whom existing and living are accompanied by motion and sensation; next the fourth creation favours his own fellow-mortals, to whom are given the gifts of existence, movement, life, and sensation, whereto is added the crowning gift of discernment

been first formulated by Xenocrates, but was first emphasised by the Stoics. See Reid on *Cic. Ac. I.* 19.

<sup>6</sup> Needless to say, Plato never propounded this doctrine.

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quod sapiunt veroque valent discernere falsum;  
 quinta creaturas superas substantia prodat,  
 quas quidam dixere deos, quia corpora sumant  
 contemplanda homini, paulo post ipsa relinquunt  
 inque suam redeant, si qua est tenuissima, formam—  
 sic fieri ut pateat substantia summa creator, 116  
 sexta tamen supraque nihil, sed cuncta sub ipso.  
 hoc in gymnasio Polemi sapientia vitam  
 excolit adiunctumque suo fovet ipsa Platoni;  
 obviet et quamquam totis Academia sectis 120  
 atque neget verum, veris hunc laudibus ornat.  
 Stoica post istos, sed concordantibus ipsis,  
 Chrysippus Zenonque docent praecepta tenere.  
 exclusi prope iam Cynici, sed limine restant;  
 ast Epicureos eliminat undique Virtus. 125

At parte ex alia textrino prima Minervae  
 palla Iovis rutilat, cuius bis coctus aeno  
 serica Sidonius fucabat stamina murex.  
 ebria nec solum spirat conchylia sandix;  
 insertum nam fulgur habet, filoque rigenti 130  
 ardebat gravidum de fragmine fulminis ostrum.  
 hic viridis patulo Glaucus pendebat amictu;  
 undabant hic arte sinus, fictoque tumore  
 mersabat pandas tempestas texta carinas.  
 Amphitryoniadi surgebat tertia vestis: 135  
 parvulus hic gemino cinctus serpente novercae

119. adiunctumque *PF*: adiunctamque. *Vid. Class. Quart. loc. cit. p. 21.*

132. patulo *ego*: patruo *CP*, glauco patruo *F*, patrio *T*: proprio *Leo*, prasino *Purgold*.

<sup>1</sup> A good example of the weakened force of *tamen*, common in late Latin. See Schmalz-Hofmann, *Synt.* p. 672, and the authorities there cited, especially Löfstedt, *Komm.* 27-33.

<sup>2</sup> *i.e.* probably Polemius, possibly Plato.



## XV. EPITHALAMIUM

and power to distinguish false from true; the fifth class reveals the created beings that dwell on high, whom some have called gods, because they assume bodies that man can view but soon abandon them and return to their own form, a form of the most ethereal fineness: thus he says it comes to pass that the highest being is shown to be the creator; he is, then,<sup>1</sup> the sixth, and there is naught above him, but all else is beneath him. In this school Philosophy ennobles the life of Polemius and herself fosters him close to her own son Plato; and although the Academy opposes all sects by denying that truth exists, that sect extols him<sup>2</sup> with praises that are true. After them, but now in harmony one with the other, Chrysippus and Zeno teach adherence to the Stoic doctrines. The Cynics are by this time almost shut out, but they linger on the threshold; as for the Epicureans, Virtue ejects them from every part.

On the other side is Minerva's weaving-hall. Here the robe of Jupiter first shows its ruddy gleam; Sidonian purple twice boiled in the cauldron coloured the silken threads, and the deep-dyed red showed not only the sheen of purple, for the gleam of lightning was intermingled, and a blaze came from the stiff threads where the purple was weighted with a broken levin-shaft.<sup>3</sup> Here also hung a likeness of green Glaucus in a spreading mantle; here art had fashioned his billowing robe, and an inwoven storm with mimic swelling was submerging curved ships. The third garment that rose before the eyes was dedicated to Amphytryon's son. Here the infant, encircled by the two serpents sent by his stepdame,<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* a representation of lightning wrought in gold thread.

<sup>4</sup> See 7. 582 n.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

inscius arridet monstris ludumque putando  
 insidias, dum nescit, amat vultuque dolentis  
 extingui deflet quos ipse interficit angues.  
 praeterea sparsis sunt haec subiecta figuris : 140  
 sus, léo, cerva, Gigans, taurus, iuga, Cerberus, hydra,  
 hospes, Nessus, Eryx, volucres, Thrax, Cacus, Amazon,  
 Cres, fluvius, Libs, poma, Lycus, virgo, polus, Oete.  
 hoc opus, et si quid superest quod numina vestit,  
 virgineae posuere manus. sed in agmine toto 145  
 inter Cecropias Ephyreidasque puellas  
 Araneola micat; proprias conferre laborat  
 ipsa Minerva manus, calathisque evicta recedens  
 cum tenet haec telas vult haec plus tela tenere.  
 hic igitur proavi trabeas imitata rigentes 150  
 palmatam parat ipsa patri, qua consul et idem  
 Agricolam contingat avum doceatque nepotes  
 non abavi solum sed avi quoque iungere fasces.  
 texuerat tamen et chlamydes, quibus ille magister  
 per Tartesiacas conspectus splenduit urbes 155  
 et quibus ingestae sub tempore praefecturae  
 conspicuus sanctas reddit se praesule leges.  
 attamen in trabea segmento luserat alto

144. numina Wilamowitz : nomina.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 9. 95-98.

<sup>2</sup> The meaning of *trabea* in later Imperial writers is a vexed question, but these words strongly confirm the view that it was strictly a synonym of *tunica palmata* (see 2. 6 n.): cf. Anson. 322. 92, *ut trabeam pictamque togam, mea praemia, consul indueret*. The word is also used in a less precise way to denote the consular vestments in general. In 7. 384 it is still more loosely used of the dictator's garb (which was, it is true, the same as the consul's; but in republican times the consul wore the *toga praetexta*, as did all other curule magistrates, and had no distinctive *tunica*). In 23. 174 the plural is used for "robes of state."

## XV. EPITHALAMIUM

smiles in all innocence upon the monsters and, taking the guileful menace as a game, loves them in his ignorance, and with a countenance of grief bewails the dying of the snakes he himself slays. Moreover, there are added in scattered figures these likenesses—the boar, the lion, the deer, the giant, the bull, the yoke, Cerberus, the hydra, the host, Nessus, Eryx, the birds, the Thracian, Cacus, the Amazon, the Cretan beast, the river, the Libyan, the apples, the Lycian, the maid, the sky, and Oeta.<sup>1</sup> This work and all other vestures fit for gods have been set up in that place by maidens' hands. But amid the whole multitude, among all the damsels of Athens and of Corinth, Araneola shines out. Minerva herself strives to match her own hands with hers, but retires beaten from the work-baskets, and when Araneola holds the web she herself prefers to hold weapons. So here this maid copies the stiff-broidered consular vestment of her great-grandfather, making with her own hands a palm-decked robe<sup>2</sup> for her father, wherewith he, a consul likewise, shall match his grandfather Agricola<sup>3</sup> and teach his grandchildren to link up in their chain of consulships their grandsire as well as their grandsire's grandsire. She had also woven the mantles in which he as Master shone before all eyes in the cities of Spain and in which conspicuous, when the prefecture was thrust upon him, he dispensed the hallowed laws from the president's seat. But on a high strip of broidery upon the consular robe she had playfully fashioned

<sup>1</sup> Agricola was Praetorian Prefect of Gaul twice (his second term of office was in A.D. 418) and consul in 421. He may have been an ancestor, possibly even the father, of the Emperor Avitus, who had a son named Agricola. See also n. on 23. 455.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

quod priscis inlustre toris. Ithacesia primum  
 fabula Dulichii<sup>1</sup>que lares formantur et ipsam 160  
 Penelopam tardas texit distexere telas.  
 Taenaron hic frustra bis rapta coniuge pulsat  
 Thrax fidibus, legem postquam temeravit Averni,  
 et prodesse putans iterum non respicit umbram.  
 hic vovet Alceste praelato coniuge vitam 165  
 rumpere, quam cernas Parcarum vellere in ipso  
 nondum pernetam fato restante salute.  
 hic nox natarum Danaï lucebat in auro,  
 quinquaginta enses genitor quibus impius aptat  
 et dat concordem discordia iussa furorem; 170  
 solus Hypermestrae servatus munere Lynceus  
 effugit; aspicias illam sibi parva paventem  
 et pro dinisso tantum pallere marito.  
 iamque Iovem in formas mutat quibus ille tenere  
 Mnemosynam, Europam, Semelen, Ledam, Cyno-  
 suram 175  
 serpens, bos, fulmen, cygnus, Dictynna solebat.  
 iamque opus in turrem Danaae pluviamque metalli  
 ibat et hic alio stillabat Iuppiter auro,  
 cum virgo aspiciens vidit Tritonida verso  
 lumine doctisonas spectare libentius artes; 180  
 commutat commota manus ac pollice docto  
 pingere philosophi victricem Laida coepit,  
 quae Cynici per menta feri rugosaeque colla

167. salute *Buecheler*: salutem *codd.* praestante salutem  
*vulgo, fortasse recte.*

182. Laida: livida *codd.*

<sup>1</sup> Orpheus.

<sup>2</sup> See ll. 89 sq. n.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. the gold threads of the embroidery.

<sup>4</sup> See note on v. 6, above.

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all the famous tales of old-time marriages. First the story of Ithaca and the Dulichian home were figured, and she wove in Penelope herself unweaving the slow-growing web. There also is the Thracian,<sup>1</sup> whose wife has twice been snatched from him; vainly he beats upon the portal of Taenarus with the throbs of his lyre, after breaking the ordinance of Avernus, and he looks not back a second time upon the shade, deeming that this is in his favour. Then there is Alcestis, who puts her husband before herself and vows to cut short her life, which you could see there in the very wool of the Fateful Sisters, not yet spun to the end, for by her destiny life still remains to her. There also shines forth in gold the night of the Danaids; their impious father girds upon them fifty swords, and the discord forced upon them stirs a concordant frenzy. Lynceus alone escapes, saved by the grace of Hypernestra; you could see her there, fearing little for herself and pale only with anxiety for the husband she has suffered to depart. The broiderer likewise changes Jove into the shapes in which he was wont to embrace Mnemosyne, Europa, Semele, Leda, Cynosura, becoming serpent, bull, lightning, swan, and Dictynna.<sup>2</sup> Then the work passed into Danae's tower and the rain of metal; and here Jupiter was dripping with another kind of gold<sup>3</sup> when the maid, looking at Tritonis,<sup>4</sup> saw that the eyes of the goddess were averted and that she was gazing with more pleasure at the arts that give forth learned utterance. Then the maiden's hand was moved to motive new, and with cunning thumb she began to portray Lais, the philosopher's vanquisher, who all over the chin and wrinkled neck of the boorish Cynic severed

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rupit odoratam redolenti forcipe barbam.  
 subrisit Pallas castoque haec addidit ore: 185  
 "non nostra ulterius ridebis dogmata, virgo  
 philosopho nuptura meo; mage flammea sumens  
 hoc mater sine texat opus. consurge, sophorum  
 egregium Polemi decus, ac nunc Stoica tandem  
 pone supercilia et Cynicos imitatus amantes 190  
 incipies iterum parvum mihi ferre Platona."  
 haerentem tali compellat voce magister:  
 "perge libens, neu tu damnes fortasse ingari,  
 quod noster iubet ille senex qui non piger hausit  
 nunina contemplans Anyto pallente venenum." 195  
 Dixerat; ille simul surgit vultuque modesto  
 tetrica nodosae commendat pallia clavae.  
 amborum tum diva comas viridantis olivae  
 pace ligat, nectit dextras, ac foedera mandat,  
 Nymphidius quae cernat avus. probat Atropos omen  
 fulvaeque concordēs iunxerunt fila sorores. 201

### XVI

#### EVCHARISTON AD FAVSTVM EPISCOPVM

Phoebum et ter ternas decima cum Pallade Musas  
 Orpheaque et laticem simulatum fontis equini

• 190. *cygnos Wilamowitz.*

195. *contemplans Wilamowitz: condemnans, condemp-*  
*niens, contempniens codd.*

<sup>1</sup> The Cynics' neglect of personal comfort gained them a bad reputation. This Cynic's beard is not over-clean; the dainty *Lais*, on the other hand, perfumes even her scissors. Possibly, however, *odoratam* means "perfumed."

<sup>2</sup> "The Master" seems to be Plato.

<sup>3</sup> The *pallium* and the *clava* (a thick staff) mark the philosopher: cf. *Epist.* IV. 11. 1, IX. 9. 14.

<sup>4</sup> It is uncertain whether he was the bride's or the bridegroom's grandfather. He may be the Nymphidius to whom *Epist.* V. 2 is addressed.

## XVI. TO BISHOP FAUSTUS

the odorous beard with fragrant scissors.<sup>1</sup> Pallas smiled, and opened her virgin lips to add these words: "No more shall you laugh at our dogmas—you maid that are bride-to-be of my philosopher; rather now put on the bridal veil and let a matron do this piece of broidery. Rise, Polemius, bright jewel among our sages; now at last put away the Stoic frown, and imitating the Cynic lovers you shall begin to bring me a second little Plato." As he hesitated, the Master<sup>2</sup> addressed him thus: "Proceed with willing heart, and do not haply condemn marriage, which the old teacher enjoins who promptly drained the poison with his eyes fixed on the gods, while Anytus' cheek grew pale."

When these words are spoken he arises and with modest mien commends the austere cloak to the keeping of the knotted cudgel.<sup>3</sup> Then the goddess binds the hair of each with green olive, the emblem of peace, joins their hands, and ordains the contract which the grandfather Nymphidius<sup>4</sup> is to ratify. Atropos approves the omen and the sister Fates with one accord unite the golden life-threads of the two.

## XVI

### THANKSGIVING TO BISHOP FAUSTUS<sup>5</sup>

Thrust far from thee, O lyre of mine, Phoebus and the nine Muses together with Pallas as tenth, Orpheus and the fabled water of the horse's spring,

<sup>5</sup> Faustus was a native of Britain (*Epist.* IX. 9. 6). He entered the monastery of Lérins (104 n.) at an early age, becoming its abbot in A.D. 433 in succession to Maximus

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Ogygiamque chelyn, quae saxa sequacia flectens  
 cantibus auritos erexit carmine muros,  
 sperne, fidis; magis ille veni nunc spiritus, oro,     5  
 pontificem dicture tuum, qui pectora priscae  
 intrasti Mariae, rapiens cum tympana siccus  
 Israel appensi per concava gurgitis iret  
 aggeribus vallatus aquae mediasque per undas  
 pulverulenta tuum clamaret turba triumphum;     10  
 quique manum Iudith ferientem colla Olophernis  
 iuisti, exciso iacuit cum gutture truncus  
 et fragilis valido latuit bene sexus in ictu;  
 expresso vel qui complens de vellere pelvem  
 inficiensque dehinc non tacto vellere terram     15  
 firmasti Gedeona, tubis inserte canoris  
 spiritus, et solo venit victoria cantu;  
 quique etiam adsumptum pecorosi de grege Iesse  
 adflasti regem, plaustro cum foederis arcam  
 imponens hostis nullo moderante bubulco     20  
 proderet obscaenum turgenti podice morbum;  
 quique trium quondam puerorum in fauce sonasti,  
 quos in Chaldaei positos fornace tyranni

14. pelvem *Luctjohann* : pellem.

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(v. 112). He was consecrated Bishop of Riez (Reii) probably about A.D. 460 and became a leading ecclesiastical figure. His opposition to the Arian creed caused his banishment after Euric had extended his territory in 476 or 477 and gained control of Riez. He was later allowed to return. His writings include two books *De Gratia*, two *De Spiritu Sancto*, and some letters. Some works have been falsely attributed to him. After his death his writings were condemned as heretical.



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and the Theban lute that with its music moved the stones to follow it and raised by its strains the eagerly listening walls. Rather do thou come, O great Spirit, I pray, to speak of thy pontiff—thou who didst enter into the heart of Miriam<sup>1</sup> in olden times, when Israel seizing their timbrels marched dry-shod through the trough of the suspended sea, walled in by ramparts of water, and thy people, dust-covered as they passed through the midst of the waves, acclaimed thy triumph :

11 Who didst aid the hand of Judith as it smote the neck of Holophernes, when the trunk was laid prostrate with the throat cut through and the strong blow gloriously disguised the weak sex<sup>2</sup> :

14 Who, filling the basin from the wrung fleece and then bedewing the earth without touching the fleece, didst hearten Gideon<sup>3</sup>; thou Spirit that wert infused into the sounding trumpets, so that victory came from their blast alone<sup>4</sup> :

18 Who didst also inspire the king that was called from amid the sheep of Jesse,<sup>5</sup> the possessor of rich flocks, when the enemy set the Ark of the Covenant on a wain with no drover to guide it and betrayed the loathsome disease by the swelling of the secret parts<sup>6</sup> :

22 Who didst once sound in the mouths of the three youths who when put in the Chaldean tyrant's

<sup>1</sup> Miriam, *Exod.* 15. 20; crossing of the Red Sea, c. 14.

<sup>2</sup> *Judith* 13. 8-10.

<sup>3</sup> *Judges* 6. 36-40.

<sup>4</sup> *Judges* 7. 19 sqq.

<sup>5</sup> *1 Sam.* 16. 11-13; 18. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Ark and emerods, *1 Sam.* cc. 5 and 6. But this story has nothing to do with King David; Sidonius has confused the story of the Philistines and the ark with that of *2 Sam.* 6. 2 sqq.

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roscida combusto mafececit flamma camino ;  
 quique volubilibus spatiantem tractibus alvi 25  
 complesti Ionam, resonant dum viscera monstri  
 introrsum psallente cibo vel pondera ventris  
 ieiuni plenique tamen vate intemerato  
 ructat cruda fames, quem singultantibus extis  
 esuriens vomuit suspenso belua morsu ; 30  
 quique duplex quondam venisti in pectus Helisei,  
 Thesbitem cum forte senem iam flammeus axis  
 tolleret et scissam linquens pro munere pellem  
 hispidus ardentes auriga intraret habenas ;  
 quique etiam Heliam terris missure secundum 35  
 Zachariae iusti linguam placate ligasti,  
 dum faceret serum rugosa puerpera patrem,  
 edita significans iusso reticere propheta,  
 gratia cum fulsit, nosset se ut lex taciturnam ;  
 quique etiam nascens ex virgine semine nullo, 40  
 ante ullum tempus deus atque in tempore Christus,  
 ad corpus quantum spectat, tu te ipse creasti ;  
 qui visum caecis, gressum quoque reddere claudis,  
 auditum surdis, mutis laxare loquelam

33. *pallam cod. Helmstad.*

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<sup>1</sup> *Daniel* 3. 13 sqq.; the "dew-like flame" *ib.* 50 (Vulgate):  
*et [Angelus Domini] fecit medium fornacis quasi ventum*  
*oris flantem, et non tetigit eos omnino ignis neque contristavit,*  
*nec quidquam molestiae intulit.* This occurs in a passage  
 of 67 verses (numbered 24-90) which does not appear in the  
 Hebrew text, but which is found in Theodotion's version  
 (from which the Vulgate took it) and in the Septuagint;  
 it doubtless occurred also in all the old Latin versions. Cur-  
 iously enough, as Professor A. Souter informs me, no Latin  
 Father quotes the above verse. Even Jerome in his comment-  
 ary on *Daniel* fails to do so, though he makes some comments  
 on the interpolated passage after pointing out that it does not  
 occur in the Hebrew.

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furnace were but wetted with a dew-like flame when the oven itself was consumed<sup>1</sup>:

25 Who didst fill Jonah,<sup>2</sup> as he traversed the rolling tracts of the whale's belly, while the inward parts of the monster resounded with the psalms sung by the swallowed food, and a hunger that was clogged within belched forth the load of a full but fasting stomach without hurting the prophet, whom the beast, ravenous yet holding off his bite, disgorged from his retching entrails:

31 Who aforetime didst pass in a double portion into the breast of Elisha, when the time came for the fiery chariot to bear aloft the Tishbite in his old age, and the rough-clad charioteer, leaving as a gift his torn coat of skin, entered the flaming car<sup>3</sup>:

35 Who also, when minded to send to earth the second Elias,<sup>4</sup> didst in thy mercy bind the tongue of righteous Zacharias,<sup>5</sup> till such time as a mother in wrinkled eld should make him a father in his old age; and who in bidding the prophet to be silent about thy message didst give token that with the dawn of Grace the Law must know that silence was coming upon it:

40 Who also, born of a pure virgin, before all time God and in time Christ, didst create thyself, as touching the body; who wert wont to give to the blind sight, to the lame the power to walk, to the deaf hearing, and to loosen the tongue of the

<sup>1</sup> *Jonah*, c. 2.

<sup>2</sup> 2 (4) *Kings* 2. 9 sqq. Sidonius is again confused: Elisha rent his own clothes and "took up the mantle of Elijah that fell from him."

<sup>3</sup> *Malachi* 4. 5, *Matth.* 11. 14, 17. 12, *Mark* 9. 13 (12 *Vulg.*), *Luke* 1. 17.

<sup>4</sup> *Luke* 1. 5 sqq.

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suetus ad hoc etiam venisti, ut mortua membra 45  
 lecto, sandapila, tumulo consurgere possint;  
 quique etiam poenas suscepta in carne tulisti,  
 sustentans alapas, ludibria, verbera, vepres,  
 sortem, vincla, crucem, clavos, fel, missile, acetum,  
 postremo mortem, sed surrecturus, adisti, 50  
 eripiens quidquid veteris migraverat hostis  
 in ius per nostrum facinus, cum femina prima  
 praeceptum solvens culpa nos perpete vinxit;  
 (qui cum te interitu petiit nec repperit in te  
 quod posset proprium convincere, perdidit omne 55  
 quod lapsu dedit Eva suo; chirographon illum,  
 quo pervasus homo est, haec compensatio rupit.  
 expers peccati pro peccatoribus amplum  
 fis pretium veteremque novus vice faenoris Adam,  
 dum moreris, de morte rapis. sic mortua mors est,  
 sic sese insidiis quas fecerat ipsa fefellit; 61  
 nam dum indiscrete petit insontemque reosque,  
 egit ut absolvi possent et crimine nexi);

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<sup>1</sup> *Coloss. 2. 14.* The Greek is ἐξαλείψας τὸ καθ' ἡμῶν χειρόγραφον τοῖς δόγμασιν and the Latin (Vulgate) is *deleens quod adversus nos erat chirographum decreti*. These very difficult words have been much discussed both by the ancient Fathers and by modern theologians. Sidonius was no theologian, but there is perhaps something to be said for his interpretation: man had by his fall been, as it were, compelled to sign a bond whereby he was made over to the devil in default of paying a seemingly impossible ransom; Christ has made himself the ransom.

<sup>2</sup> *Pervasus* is very difficult. In legal Latin and in many late authors *pervadere*, *pervasio*, and *pervisor* are used with reference to an act of wanton appropriation. The act may be a flagrant theft (property stolen from a church is called *pervasa* in Paulin. Petricord. *Vit. Mart.* VI. 247) or the unlawful occupation of a dwelling. In the latter meaning we find *pervadere* and *pervisor* used metaphorically by Christian

## XVI. TO BISHOP FAUSTUS

mute, and didst come that dead bodies might be able to rise from bed, bier, and tomb; who didst in thine adopted flesh suffer torments, enduring buffets, scoffs, stripes, thorns, casting of lots, chains, the cross, the nails, the gall, the spear, the vinegar, and finally didst meet death, though only to rise again, delivering whatsoever had passed into the dominion of the old Enemy through our transgression, when the first woman broke the commandment and so fettered us with abiding guilt (But the Enemy, when he sought thy destruction nor found in thee aught that he could prove to be his own, lost all that Eve gave him by her fall; and this recompense of thine dissolved the bond<sup>1</sup> by which man became a robber's possession.<sup>2</sup> Free from sin thou didst become an ample ransom for sinners, and thou, the new Adam, didst by dying pay the price and snatch the old Adam from death. Thus Death is dead, caught in the very trap himself had made; for attacking without distinction innocent and guilty, he brought it to pass that even those enslaved by sin received the power to be absolved):

writers with reference to demoniac possession. In this sense the devil is called *pervator* by Paulinus, *op. cit.* VI. 44; the same metaphor (probably suggested by *Matth.* 12. 29, *Luke* 11. 24) is developed more fully by Sedulius in relating the story of the boy possessed by an unclean spirit (*Matth.* 17. 14-18, *Mark* 9. 17-27, *Luke* 9. 38-42, A.V. numbering): Christ compels the spirit *pervasa migrare domo* (*Pasch. Carm.* III. 309; so in the prose version, *Pasch. Op.* III. 25, *pervasae domus habitaculo migraturus*). Sidonius may have had this image in his mind: in virtue of the "bond" the Evil One has seized possession of man and made of him a dwelling-place. On the other hand the meaning of *pervasus* here may be simply "seized," "snatched away," "stolen." The translation given attempts to cover both meanings.

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quique etiam iustos ad tempus surgere tecum  
iussisti cineres, cum tectis tempore longo 65  
inrupit festina salus infusaque raptim  
excussit tumulis solidatas vita favillas:  
da Faustum laudare tuum, da solvere grates,  
quas et post debere iuvat. te, magne sacerdos,  
barbitus hic noster plectro licet impare cantat. 70

Haec igitur prima est vel causa vel actio laudum,  
quod mihi germani, dum lubrica volvitur aetas,  
servatus tecum domini per dona probatur  
nec fama titubante pudor; te respicit istud  
quantumcumque bonum; merces debebitur illi, 75  
ille tibi. sit laus, si labi noluit, eius;  
nam quod nec potuit, totum ad te iure redundat.  
praeterea quod me pridem Reios veniente,  
cum Procyon fureret, cum solis torridus ignis  
flexilibus rimis sitientes scriberet agros, 80  
hospite te nostros exceptit protinus aestus  
pax, domus, umbra, latex, benedictio, mensa, cubile.  
omnibus attamen his sat praestat quod voluisti  
ut sanctae matris sanctum quoque limen adirem.  
derigui, fateor, mihi conscius atque repente 85  
tinxit adorantem pavido reverentia vultum;  
nec secus intremui quam si me forte Rebeccae  
Israel aut Samuel crinitus duceret Annae.

78. *venientem codl.*

85. *derigui Luetjohann* : dirigui.

<sup>1</sup> *Matth.* 27. 52 sq.

<sup>2</sup> We do not know the name of any brother of Sidonius.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* although a reward in heaven will be his due, you will have made him what he is.

<sup>4</sup> The mother is probably (as Krusch conjectured) Mother Church, not the mother of Faustus, and *s. m. limen* is the threshold of the cathedral church.

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64 Who didst likewise bid the ashes of the just to rise with thee at the appointed time,<sup>1</sup> when salvation of a sudden burst upon them who had long been covered up, and a flood of life poured into them and swept their re-knit ashes from the tomb—

68 Do thou grant that I may praise thy servant Faustus, that I may pay my debt of gratitude, which even after this payment I am glad to owe. Thee, great priest, this lyre of mine doth hymn, albeit with a quill unequal to the task.

The first cause and burden of my praises is that when my brother <sup>2</sup> was at an age that is prone to slip his virtue was preserved with thy help through the grace of our Lord, and stands approved—yea, and with no wavering in his good report. This blessing in all its immensity is to be ascribed to thee; the reward will be due to him, but he will be due to thee.<sup>3</sup> If he has of his own free will refused to stumble, let the praise be his; but that he could not have stumbled even if he would redounds by right entirely to thy credit. I praise thee too because when I came aforesaid to Reii, while Procyon was raging and the sun's parching fire was marking the thirsty fields with winding cracks, thy hospitality straightway greeted my hot discomfort with peace, home, shade, water, benediction, bed, and board. But a far greater boon than all these was that thou wert willing for me to approach also the hallowed threshold of the hallowed mother.<sup>4</sup> I stood stock-still, I confess, as I felt my unworthiness, and all at once fearful awe coloured my face as it thrilled with adoration; yea, I trembled as if Israel were bringing me to Rebecca or long-haired Samuel to Hannah.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

quapropter te vel votis sine fine colentes  
adfectum magnum per carmina parva fatemur. 90

Seu te flammatae Syrtes et inhospita tesqua  
seu caeno viridante palus seu nigra recessu  
incultum mage saxa tenent, ubi sole remoto  
concava longaevas adservant antra tenebras;  
seu te praeruptis porrecta in rupibus Alpīs 95  
succinctos gelido libantem caespite somnos,  
anachoreta, tremit (quae quamquam frigora portet,  
conceptum Christi numquam domat illa calorem),  
qua nunc Helias, nunc te iubet ire Iohannes,  
nunc duo Macarii, nunc et Paphnutius heros, 100  
nunc Or, nunc Ammon, nunc Sarmata, nunc Hilarion,  
nunc vocat in tunica nudus te Antonius illa  
quam fecit palmae foliis manus alma magistri;  
seu te Lirinus priscum complexa parentem est,  
qua tu iam fractus pro magna saepe quiete 105  
discipulis servire venis vixque otia somni,  
vix coctos capture cibos abstemius aevum  
ducis et insertis pinguis ieiunia psalmis,  
fratribus insinuans quantos illa insula plana

108. pingis CTF : pinguas *Caduceus*, fortasse recte.

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<sup>1</sup> Probably the prophet Elijah and John the Baptist, though there were Egyptian anchorites who bore these names. The Macarii, Hilarion, and Antonius are mentioned in *Epist.* VII. 9. 9. *Sarmata* is unknown; it may be either the man's name or a description of him, "the Sarmatian." For the others see *Dict. Chr. Biog.* and Dom E. C. Butler in *C. M. H.*, I. 521 sqq. The "master" of St. Anthony was Paulus (Thebaeus).

<sup>2</sup> Lirinus (*Lerina* in Pliny), modern St.-Honorat, one of the Lérins-group of islands opposite Antibes.

<sup>3</sup> *Montes* is used by ecclesiastical writers to denote bishops and priests. There is here, of course, a frigid contrast between *montes* and *plana insula*. Caprasius was associated with Honoratus in the foundation of the monastery. *Lupus* = St.



## XVI. TO BISHOP FAUSTUS

Wherefore I honour thee without ceasing even in my prayers, and now I acknowledge in paltry verse my great affection.

Whether thou dost tarry roughly garbed in a cheerless wilderness by the sun-fired Syrtes or choosest rather a marsh full of green slime or the dark recesses of rocks where deep sunless caves maintain an age-long gloom; or whether the Alps, stretching afar with their long line of precipitous crags, tremble before thee, great anchorite, as thou snatchest brief slumber on the chill ground (and with all their cold they never overcome the warm glow that Christ hath set in thy heart); for this is the way that thou art urged to go, now by Elias, now by John,<sup>1</sup> now by the two Macarii, now by the great Paphnutius, now by Or, now by Ammon, now by Sarmata, now by Hilarion; and another time the call comes from Antonius, clad only in that tunic which the kindly hand of his master made of palm-leaves:

- 104 Or whether Lirinus<sup>2</sup> hath welcomed thee, its erstwhile father, whither thou, instead of resting long when thy strength is exhausted, dost often come to serve thy disciples, and thou wilt scarce repose thyself in sleep or take cooked food, but livest a life of self-denial and makest thy fasts rich with intervals of psalmody, meanwhile instilling lessons into the brethren, telling how many great eminences<sup>3</sup>

Lupus of Troyes. Honoratus became Bp. of Arles, and Maximus (see *Epist.* VIII. 14. 2) succeeded him at Lérins and subsequently became Bp. of Riez; in each of these offices his successor was Faustus. St. Eucherius was a monk at Lérins and afterwards Bp. of Lyons. His theological writings were potent for many centuries. Hilarius was a monk of Lérins, who followed Honoratus to Arles but subsequently returned to his old monastery. He afterwards became Bp. of Arles

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

miserit in caelum montes, quae sancta Caprasi 110  
 vita senis iuvenisque Lupi, quae gratia patrem  
 mansit Honoratum, fuerit quis Maximus ille,  
 urbem tu cuius monachosque antistes et abbas  
 bis successor agis, celebrans quoque laudibus illis  
 Eucherii venientis iter, redeuntis Hilari; 115  
 seu te commissus populus tenet et minor audet  
 te medio tumidos maiorum temnere mores;  
 seu tu sollicitus curas qua languidus esca  
 quave peregrinus vivat, quid pascat et illum,  
 lubrica crura cui tenuat sub compede carcer; 120  
 seu mage funeribus mentem distractus humandis,  
 livida defuncti si pauperis ossa virescant,  
 infastiditum fers ipse ad busta cadaver;  
 seu te conspicuis gradibus venerabilis arae  
 contionaturum plebs sedula circumstistit, 125  
 expositae legis bibat auribus ut medicinam:  
 quidquid agis, quocumque loci es, semper mihi  
 Faustus,  
 semper Honoratus, semper quoque Maximus esto.

## XVII

### AD V. C. OMMATIVM

Quattuor ante dies quam lux Sextilis adusti  
 prima spiciferum proferat orbe caput

113. monachosque *Sirmondus* : monachusque.

---

<sup>1</sup> The preacher is seated, as was usual; the congregation stands, as was the common, but not universal, custom at this time. Augustine (*De Catechizandis Rudibus*, c. 13, a very interesting chapter) expresses approval of the practice adopted in some "transmarine" (i.e. Italian) churches, where seats were provided for all. He would have them provided everywhere, at least for the infirm and the physically tired.

## XVII. TO OMMATIUS

that flat island hath sent soaring to the skies, of what kind was the holy life of old Caprasius and young Lupus, what favour was destined for Honoratus their founder, and who was that Maximus over whose city and monks thou, twice his successor, wert set as bishop and abbot; and thou dost also acclaim in these praises the coming of Eucherius and the return of Hilarius:

- 116 Or whether the people committed to thy charge now have thee among them, and the lesser folk, with thee in their midst, dare to despise the proud ways of the great; or whether thou dost anxiously take heed what food the sick or the stranger has and how even he is fed whose legs the prison wastes until they slide loosely beneath the fetters; or whether the burial of the dead has all thy thoughts, and loathing not the body of one of the poor although a green hue be spreading over the livid remains, thou with thine own hands dost bear it to the tomb; or whether thou art about to preach from the conspicuous steps of the holy altar, and the eager crowd take their stand around thee<sup>1</sup> that their ears may drink in the healing medicine of the Law's exposition—whatever thou doest, wherever thou art, I wish thee for evermore the blessings of thy three names, Fortunate, Honoured, Greatest.

## XVII

### TO OMMATIUS, SENATOR<sup>2</sup>

Four days before the first dawn of August raises above the earth its corn-wreathed head there will

<sup>2</sup> For Ommatius see 11. 52 n.



## XVII. TO OMMATIUS

be celebrated by my family a sixteenth birthday,<sup>1</sup> which craves to be made lucky by your coming. You shall not have a meal set for you on jewelled tables, nor shall Assyrian purple provide your dining-couch. I shall not bury in the manifold recesses of a glittering side-board masses of dark old silver-plate; nor shall there be offered here a cup whose twisted handles clasp sides overlaid with ruddy gold. Our salvers are of moderate size, and not so made that their artistry atones for their lack of bulk. The rustic table of your Gallic<sup>2</sup> friend will not receive loaves that were wont to make the fields yellow by the Libyan Syrtes. As for wines, I have none of Gaza, no Chian or Falernian, none sent by the vines of Sarepta<sup>3</sup> for you to drink. There are here no cups distinguished by the name of that canton which the triumvir himself established in our land.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, we beg you to come; Christ will provide all things, by whose grace this has been made a real homeland<sup>5</sup> for me through your love.

<sup>3</sup> The Zarephath of 1 *Kings* 17. 9 f. (Sarepta in *Luke* 4. 26), between Tyre and Sidon. There is an interesting reminiscence of this passage in Corippus, *In Laudem Iustini* III. 87 f.: *dulcia Bacchi munera quae Sarepta* (note the quantity) *ferax, quae Gaza crearat*.

<sup>4</sup> Cass. Dio, XLVI. 50, states that Lug(u)dunum was founded in 43 B.C. by Munatius Plancus and M. Aemilius Lepidus (who was about to become a triumvir), and that the first inhabitants were refugees from Vienna (mod. Vienne). As the district round Vienne was famous for its wine, I believe that Sidonius means "cups of the wine of Vienne." The Viennenses are rather loosely described as a *pagus*, but that is no serious objection. "Our (or possibly "my") land" refers to the territory of Lyons. See *Class. Quart. loc. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>5</sup> This refers to the poet's new home in Auvergne.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

## XVIII

### DE BALNEIS VILLAE SVAE

Si quis Avitacum dignaris visere nostram,  
non tibi displiceat: sic quod habes placeat.  
aemula Baiano tolluntur culmina cono  
parque cothurnato vertice fulget apex.  
garrula Gauranis plus murmurat unda fluentis 5  
contigui collis lapsa supercilio.  
Lucrinum stagnum dives Campania nollet,  
aequora si nostri cerneret illa lacus.  
illud puniceis ornatur litus echinis:  
piscibus in nostris, hospes, utrumque vides. 10  
si libet et placido partiris gaudia corde,  
quisquis ades, Baias tu facis hic animo.

## XIX

### DE PISCINA SVA

Intrate agentes post balnea torrida fluctus  
ut solidet calidam frigore lympa cutem;  
et licet hoc solo mergatis membra liquore,  
per stagnum nostrum lumina vestra natant.

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<sup>1</sup> See introductory note to *Epist.* II. 2. With *nostram* understand *villam*.

<sup>2</sup> For the conical roof cf. *Epist.* II. 2. 5. Apparently a prominent bathing-establishment at Baias had a roof of that kind.

<sup>3</sup> *Cothurnato* gives the idea of dignity, possibly also of height, as in Pliny, *Epist.* IX. 7. 2, of which this is probably a rather loose reminiscence. There Pliny tells us of two villas which he possessed on the shores of Lake Como. One was on a height, with a view of the lake, the other was down on the lake-side. The former he called Tragedy because it seemed to be supported on buskins (*cothurni*), the latter he named Comedy because it seemed to rest on humble "socks" (*socculi*).

## XIX. ON HIS SWIMMING-BATH

### XVIII

#### ON THE BATHS OF HIS COUNTRY HOUSE

Whoe'er you be, if you deign to visit our Avitacum,<sup>1</sup> let it not dissatisfy you: so may what *you* possess satisfy *you*. Here a roof<sup>2</sup> rises that rivals the cone of Baiae, and no whit inferior shines the peaked top with its proud crest.<sup>3</sup> There the chattering water that falls from the brow of the neighbouring hill babbles more busily than the streams that flow from Gaurus. Rich Campania would be ill-pleased with the Lucrine mere if she beheld the waters of our lake. That other shore is adorned by red sea-urchins, but in our fish, O stranger, you see both characters.<sup>4</sup> If you are willing, and if you share our joys with contented heart, gentle visitor, whoever you be, you can create a Baiae here in your fancy.

### XIX

#### ON HIS SWIMMING-BATH

Enter ye the chill waves after the steaming baths, that the water by its coldness may brace your heated skin; and though you plunge your limbs in this liquid alone,<sup>5</sup> our pond makes your eyes swim.

<sup>1</sup> The meaning seems to be "You can see in our fish both characteristics of the *echini* of Baiae," i.e. both "fishiness" and redness (cf. *Epist.* II. 2. 17), or possibly redness and prickliness. But the text may be corrupt. It is just possible that *utrumque vides* is a corruption of *acumen idem*, "there is the same sharpness," the fish having a sharp flavour (cf. Plin. *N. H.* XIV. 124, *saporis quaedam acumina*) and the *echini* sharp prickles.

<sup>5</sup> Perhaps the point is "Although it is only water, with no stronger liquor in it." For another explanation see Sempke, *op. cit.*, p. 113.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

### XX

#### AD ECDICIUM SORORIVM SVVM

Natalis noster Nonas instare Novembres  
admonet: occurras non rogo, sed iubeo.  
sit tecum coniunx, duo nunc properate; sed illud  
post annum optamus tertius ut venias.

### XXI

#### DE PISCIBVS NOCTE CAPTIS

Quattuor haec primum pisces nox insuit hamis;  
inde duos tenui, tu quoque sume duos.  
quos misi, sunt maiores; rectissimus ordo est;  
namque animae nostrae portio maior eras.

### XXII

#### SIDONIVS PONTIO LEONTIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Dum apud Narbonem quondam Martium dictum  
sed nuper factum moras necto, subiit animum quos-

---

<sup>1</sup> Ecdicius was the son of the Emperor Avitus, and therefore the brother of Sidonius' wife, Papianilla. He was the hero of the last resistance of Auvergne to the Goths (see *Introd.*, p. xlvj). *Epist.* II. 1 and III. 3 are addressed to him. This poem shows that the birthday of Sidonius was the 5th of November. Klotz (Pauly-Wissowa, *R.-E.* s.v. *Sidonius*) thinks the word *instare* may mean that the birthday was the day before the Nones (i.e. the 4th). Obviously he misunderstood *natalis*, although the meaning found here occurs even in Ovid and Tibullus. The meaning "birthday" does not fit the rest of the sentence.

<sup>2</sup> The owner of "Burgus" was Pontius Leontius of Bordeaux, "easily the first of the Aquitanians" (*Epist.* VIII. 12. 5). The poem is very obscure in places, and gives no adequate idea of the arrangement of the buildings. The name of this



## XXII. SIDONIUS TO LEONTIUS

### XX

#### TO HIS BROTHER-IN-LAW ECDICIUS<sup>1</sup>

The genius of my birth reminds me that the Nones of November are at hand. I do not invite you, I order you to come to me. Bring your wife with you; hasten—a couple this time, but next year I hope there will be three of you.

### XXI

#### FISH CAUGHT AT NIGHT

This night for the first time fixed four fishes on my hooks. Of these I have kept two; do you also take two. Those I am sending are the largest; the arrangement is perfectly just, for you are the larger portion of my heart.

### XXII

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND PONTIUS LEONTIUS, GREETING<sup>2</sup>

1. As I was trying to spin out the days at Narbo<sup>3</sup>—which was named of old and has in recent times become in reality the town of Mars—it occurred to

Burgus is believed to survive in the modern Bourg-sur-Gironde. Stevens, p. 65 n. 1, refers to Naufroy, *Histoire de Bourg-sur-Gironde* (1898), p. 9, which I have not been able to consult.

<sup>3</sup> Narbo Martius was the full name of the town, but the origin of *Martius* is uncertain. In A.D. 462, the town was occupied by Theodoric II. For its struggles with Theodoric I see 7. 475 sqq. See also n. on 23. 59–87.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

piam secundum amorem tuum hexametros concinnare [vel condere], quibus lectis oppido scires, etsi utrique nostrum disparatis aequo plusculum locis lar familiaris incolitur, non ideo tam nobis animum dissidere quam patriam. 2. habes igitur hic Dionysum inter triumphi Indici oblectamenta marcentem; habes et Phoebum, quem tibi iure poetico inquilinum factum constat ex numine, illum scilicet Phoebum Anthedii mei perfamiliarem, cuius collegio vir praefectus non modo musicos quosque verum etiam geometras, arithmeticos et astrologos disserendi arte supervenit; siquidem nullum hoc exactius compertum habere censuerim quid sidera zodiaci obliqua, quid planetarum vaga, quid exotici sparsa praevaleant. 3. nam ita his, ut sic dixerim, membris philosophiae claret ut videatur mihi Iulium Firmicum,<sup>1</sup> Iulianum Vertacum, Fullonium Saturninum, in libris matheseos peritissimos conditores, absque interprete ingenio tantum suffragante didicisse. nos vestigia doctrinae ipsius adorantes coram canoro cygno ravum anserem profiteamur. quid te amplius moror? Burgum tuam, quo iure amicum decuit, meam feci, probe sciens vel materiam tibi esse placituras, etiamsi ex solido poema displiceat.

---

<sup>1</sup> Iulium Firmicum *solus exhibet Vatican. 3421.*

<sup>1</sup> The two mentions of Phoebus are not very clear. The first seems to allude to the fact that Paulinus, son of Pontius, is a poet (n. on 9. 304), the second to some poetical society or institute of which Anthedius was president. On Anthedius see 9. 312 n.

## XXII. SIDONIUS TO LEONTIUS

me to put together some hexameters after your own heart. I hoped that when you read them you might feel well assured that, although our respective household gods are set in places a bit farther from one another than they ought to be, it does not follow that our souls are as far apart as our homes. 2. Here, then, you can find Dionysus bemused amid the delights of his Indian triumph, and Phoebus<sup>1</sup> also, who, as is well known, is for you a god no longer but rather, through a poet's privilege, an inmate of your house—that same Phoebus who is a great crony of my friend Anthedius, head of the Apolline college, a man who surpasses in the art of lecturing not only all musicians but all geometers, arithmeticians, and astrologers; for I should think no one knows more perfectly the special influences of the various heavenly bodies—the slanting signs of the zodiac, the roaming planets, or the scattered stars of the extra-zodiacal region. 3. He is indeed so eminent in these members (if I may so term them) of philosophy that he seems to me to have mastered without an interpreter, solely by dint of his own genius, the greatest savants among writers on astrology, Iulius Firmicus, Iulianus Vertacus, and Fullonius Saturninus. Following reverently the footsteps of such<sup>2</sup> learning, I pretend to no higher title than a hoarse gander in the presence of a tuneful swan. But why delay you further? I have made your home, “The Castle,” my own, using a friend's proper privilege, knowing full well that my subject-matter will please you even though the poem should be entirely displeasing.

<sup>1</sup> *Ipsius* is here a mere demonstrative. See critical note on *Epist.* I. 9. 7.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

### BVRGVS PONTII LEONTII

Bistonii stabulum regis, Busiridis aras,  
Antiphatae mensas et Taurica regna Thoantis  
atque Ithaci ingenio fraudatum luce Cyclopa  
portantem frontis campo per concava montis  
par prope transfossi tenebrosum luminis antrum, 5  
hospes, adi, si quis Burgum taciturus adisti.  
et licet in carmen non passim laxet habenas  
Phoebus et hic totis non pandat carbasa fandi,  
quisque tamen tantos non laudans ore penates  
inspicias, inspiceris: resonat sine voce voluntas; 10  
nam tua te tacitum vivere silentia clamant.

Ergo age, Pierias, Erato, mihi percutere chordas;  
responsent Satyri, digitumque pedemque moventes  
ludant, et tremulo non rumpant cantica saltu.  
quidquid forte Dryas vel quidquid Hamadryas  
umquam 15  
conexis sibimet festum plausere Napaeis,  
dependant modo, Burge, tibi, vel Naidas istic,  
Nereidum chorus alme, doce, cum forte Garunna  
huc redeunte venis pontumque in flumine sulcas.  
pande igitur causas, Erato, laribusque sit ede 20  
quis genius; tantum non est sine praesule culmen.

8. totus *TF*.

---

<sup>1</sup> Diomedes, who fed his mares on human flesh.

<sup>2</sup> King of Egypt, who sacrificed foreign visitors to his country, until he was slain by Hercules.

<sup>3</sup> King of the cannibal Laestrygones (Homer, *Od.* X. 80 sqq.).

<sup>4</sup> King of Tauris, where human sacrifices were offered.

## XXII. CASTLE OF PONTIUS LEONTIUS

### THE CASTLE OF PONTIUS LEONTIUS

Stranger, whoever you may be, that have visited the Castle and yet are fain to keep silence about it, may you visit the stalls of the Bistonian king,<sup>1</sup> the altars of Busiris,<sup>2</sup> the table of Antiphates,<sup>3</sup> the Tauric realm of Thoas,<sup>4</sup> and the Cyclops who was robbed of his sight by the cunning of the man of Ithaca and bears on the wide expanse of his forehead, as he ranges through his mountain-cave, a gloomy cavern well-nigh as vast, the socket of his pierced eye: and although Phoebus suffers not all and sundry to give free rein to song and does not here spread out fully the sails of eloquence for every man, yet whoever you are who, with no praise on your lips, view that splendid home, you are thereby put on view yourself; your inclination loudly heralds itself though without voice, for your silence proclaims you dumb with jealousy.

Come then, Erato, strike the Pierian strings for me. Let the Satyrs accompany the strain, playing their part with movement of finger and of foot, but not interrupting the melody with jerky leaps. All the festive dances that Dryads or Hamadryads hand in hand with the nymphs of the glen have ever danced may they now bestow on thee alone, great Castle! Kindly choir of Nereids, teach the Naiads there at the season when the Garonne flows back thither and ye come, cleaving the sea in the midst of the river.<sup>5</sup> Reveal then, O Erato, the origin of the house, and declare what protecting spirit watches that home; for so great an edifice cannot lack a divine guardian.

<sup>5</sup> See 7. 393 n. and *vv.* 105-113 below.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Forte sagittiferas Euan populatus Erythras  
 vite capistratas cogebat ad esseda tigres,  
 intrabat duplicem qua temo racemifer arcum.  
 marcidus ipse sedet curru; madet ardua cervix   25  
 sudati de rore meri, caput aurea rumpunt  
 cornua et indigenam iaculantur fulminis ignem  
 (sumpserat hoc nascens primum, cum transiit olim  
 in patrium de matre femur); fert tempus utrumque  
 veris opes rutilosque ligat vindemia flores;   30  
 cantharus et thyrsus dextra laevaue feruntur,  
 nec tegit exertos, sed tangit palla lacertos;  
 dulce natant oculi, quos si fors vertat in hostem,  
 attonitos, solum dum cernit, inebriat Indos.  
 tum salebris saliens quotiens se concutit axis,   35  
 passim deciduo perfunditur orbita musto.  
 Bassaridas, Satyros, Panas Faunosque docebat  
 ludere Silenus iam numine plenus alumno,  
 sed comptus tamen ille caput; nam vertice nudo  
 amissos sertis studet excusare capillos.   40  
 Corniger inde novi fit Ganges pompa triumphi;  
 cernuus inpexam faciem stetit ore madenti et  
 arentes vitreis adiuvit fletibus undas;  
 coniectas in vincla manus post terga revinxit  
 pampinus; hic sensim captivo umore refusus   45  
 sponte refrondescit per bracchia roscida palmes.

<sup>1</sup> *Eryth.*: n. on 2. 447.

<sup>2</sup> Both the Latin and the translation are rather strained. One is tempted to suspect that a line has dropped out of the text. The "double arch" can scarcely be anything but the double yoke, illustrations of which may be seen in the ordinary dictionaries of antiquities. The pole was passed through the connecting-piece between the two yokes. Those editors who punctuate so as to connect v. 24 with v. 25 make *duplicem arcum* unintelligible.

## XXII. CASTLE OF PONTIUS LEONTIUS

It chanced that Bacchus, having laid waste Erythrae,<sup>1</sup> the famed haunt of bowmen, was subjecting vine-bridled tigers to his chariot where a pole that bore clustering grapes entered the double arch.<sup>2</sup> In the car sat the god himself, all languorous; his proud neck sweated with exuded wine; from his head sprang golden horns, which hurled forth his native levin-fire (this he had first received at his birth long before, when he passed from his mother into his father's thigh). Both his temples were covered with the bounties of springtime, and the vintage crop fastened the red flowers in their place; his right hand carried a goblet and his left a thyrsus, and his arms were bare, the cloak just touching without hiding them. There was charm in his swimming eyes, and if he chanced to turn them upon the enemy he dazed those Indians by his mere look and made them drunken. Whenever the wheel jolted, forced upward by rough places, the track was soaked all over with a falling shower of new wine. Bassarids, Satyrs, Pans and Fauns were being taught to frolic by Silenus; he was now filled with the divinity that he had reared, but his head was in orderly array; for on his bare pate he took pains to palliate the loss of hair with a garland.

The next show in this new triumph is horned Ganges. With hanging head he has taken his place; his face is unkempt and his cheeks bedewed, and with his glassy tears he has helped to replenish his parched stream. His hands have been cast into chains, and a vine-branch has fastened them behind his back; and gradually the water thus held prisoner has caused fresh growth, and of its own accord the vine-shoot sends forth new leafage all over those dewy arms.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Nec non et rapti coniunx ibi vineta mariti  
it croceas demissa genas vetitaque recondi  
lampade cum Solis radiis Aurora rubebat.

Adfuit hic etiam post perdita cinnama Phoenix, 50  
formidans mortem sibi non superesse secundam.  
succedit captiva cohors, quae fercula gazis  
fert onerata suis; ebur hic hebenusque vel aurum  
et niveae piceo raptae de pectore bacae  
gestantur; quicumque nihil sustentat, odors 55  
mittitur in nexus; videas hic ipsa placere  
supplicia et virides violis halare catenas.

Ultima nigrantes incedunt praeda elephantii;  
informis cui forma gregi: riget hispida dorso  
vix ferrum passura cutis; quippe improba cratem 60  
nativam nec tela forant, contracta vicissim  
tensaue terga feris crepitant usuque cavendi  
pellunt excussis impactum missile rugis.

Iamque iter ad Thebas per magnum victor agebat  
aera et ad summas erexerat orgia nubes, 65  
cum videt Aonia venientem Delion arce.  
grypas et ipse tenet: vultus his laurea curvos  
fronde lupata ligant; hederis quoque circumplexis  
pendula lora virent; sensim fera subvolat ales  
aerias terraeque vias, ne forte citato 70  
alarum strepitu lignosas frangat habenas.  
aeternum nitet ipse genas; crevere corymbis

55. odors *edit. Baret*: odoris.

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<sup>1</sup> The "stolen husband" is probably Tithonus, though he is not the only beautiful youth that Aurora carried off. Commentators wrongly take the husband to be Ganges.

<sup>2</sup> 2. 417 n.

<sup>3</sup> Apollo. The "Aonian height" is Mt. Helicon, sacred to Apollo and the Muses. In v. 96 below *Aonios colles* means "Boeotian hills." Boeotia (especially Thebes and Orchomenos) was famous for its worship of Dionysus.



## XXII. CASTLE OF PONTIUS LEONTIUS

There also walks in chains the wife of a stolen husband,<sup>1</sup> Aurora. Her saffron-hued countenance is downcast, but her lamp may not be hidden, and she is flushed with the glow of the sun's rays.

Here also appears the Phoenix,<sup>2</sup> who has lost his cinnamon and fears that after this no second death can be his. Then comes a company of prisoners bearing trays laden with their treasures; here are carried ivory and ebony and gold and snow-white gems snatched from pitch-black bosoms. Whoever does not support a load is consigned to fragrant bonds, and it is plain that their very punishment is pleasing, for the verdant chains breathe forth the odour of violets.

Last of the spoil, the dusky elephants advance, a troop of unshapely shape. On their backs is a skin rough and stiff, that will scarce let steel pass through it; for even ruthless javelins fail to pierce that natural barrier, and the hide crackles as it stretches and contracts in turn and with practised defence repels the smiting missile by shaking out its wrinkles.

Now the conqueror was speeding his way to Thebes through the vast air and had taken up his revelling rout to the clouds, when he saw the god of Delos<sup>3</sup> approaching from the Aonian height. This god likewise wields the rein, but his steeds are gryphons; curbs of leafy laurel bind their hooked beaks; the hanging reins are green with ivy intertwined. Slowly and steadily do those winged beasts fly along their paths in air and over land, lest haply by a violent flapping of their wings they break the woody reins. The countenance of the god shines with an eternal radiance; clusters of ivy-berries stand out upon his

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tempora et auratum verrit coma concolor axem;  
 laeva parte tenet vasta dulcedine raucam  
 caelato Pythone lyram, pars dextra sagittas 75  
 continet atque alio resonantes murmurare nervos.  
 ibant Pipliades pariter mediumque noveno  
 circumstantes umbrabant syrmate currum.  
 pendet per teretes tripodas Epidaurius anguis  
 diffusus sanctum per colla salubria virus. 80  
 hic et crinisatas iungebat Pegasus alas,  
 portans doctiloquo facundum crure Crotonem.

Vt sese iunxere chori, consurgit uterque  
 fratris in amplexus, sed paulo segnior Euan,  
 dum pudet instabiles, si surgat, prodere plantas. 85  
 tum Phoebus "quo pergis?" ait, "num forte nocentes,  
 Bacche, petis Thebas? te cretus Echione nempe  
 abnegat esse deum. linque his, rogo, moenia, linque,  
 et mecum mage flecte rotas. despexit Agaue  
 te colere et nosmet Niobe; riget inde superba, 90  
 vulnera tot patiens quot spectat vulnera ventris,  
 optantemque mori gravius clementia fixit;  
 parcere saepe malum est sensumque inferre dolori.  
 ipsa autem nato occiso Pentheia mater  
 amplius ut furiat numquid non sana futura est? 95  
 ergone Aonios colles habitare valemus,

82. Crotonem *Wilamowitz*: Creontem.

90. superba *Luetjohann*: superbum.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. different from that of the lyre-strings.

<sup>2</sup> Croton (Crotos, Crotus) was a son of Pan and Eupheme, nurse of the muses. He became the constellation Sagittarius. *Crure* alludes to metre; *pede* would have been clearer.

<sup>3</sup> Pentheus.

<sup>4</sup> The mother of Pentheus. She had cast a slight on the parentage of Bacchus, who exacted vengeance by driving her and her sisters into a frenzy, in which they slew Pentheus.

<sup>5</sup> i.e. just as Niobe's preservation was a cruel mercy,

## XXII. CASTLE OF PONTIUS LEONTIUS

brow and his gilded car is swept by tresses of like hue. On his left he holds a sonorous lyre of ineffable sweetness, with Python graven upon it; on his right are arrows and strings that echo with a different twang.<sup>1</sup> With him advance the Muses, all gathered around him and casting on the midst of his chariot the shadow of their ninefold robes. The serpent of Epidaurus hangs loosely coiled about the shapely tripod, with a hallowed essence diffused throughout his health-giving neck. Joined to them also is Pegasus with his hairy wings, carrying on his back Croton,<sup>2</sup> whose skilled foot brings forth eloquent utterance.

When the two bands came together each god arose to give a brotherly embrace, but Bacchus a little more slowly than the other, for he was shy of betraying his unsteady feet by rising. Then Phoebus said, "Whither away? Can it be, Bacchus, that thou art seeking guilty Thebes? True, Echion's descendant<sup>3</sup> denies thy godhead: nevertheless, leave the city to them, I pray thee; yea, do so, and rather make thy wheels go my way. Agaue<sup>4</sup> scorned thy worship and Niobe mine; hence was Niobe turned to stone in her pride, herself suffering a wound for every wound that she saw her offspring suffer; and as she longed for death my mercy gave her that rigid form, a boon worse than death; 'tis oft an ill service to spare and to inflict on pain longer suffering. So shall not even Pentheus' mother, having slain her son, regain her senses only to become more frenzied still?<sup>5</sup> Nay, can we dwell on the Aonian heights<sup>6</sup> when in time to come an

so the restoration of Agaue's sanity will result in a madness more terrible than before, because it will enable her to realise what she has done. *Numquid non* is often used in Late Latin for *nonne*.

<sup>6</sup> See n. on v. 66.

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cum patris extincti thalamis potietur adulter,  
frater natorum, coniunx genetricis habendus,  
vitricus ipse suus? cordi est si iungere gressum,  
dicam qua pariter sedem tellure locemus. 100

“ Est locus, irrigua qua rupe, Garunna, rotate,  
et tu qui simili festinus in aequora lapsu  
exis curvata, Durani muscose, saburra,  
iam pigrescentes sensim confunditis amnes.  
currit in adversum hic pontus multoque recursu 105  
flumina quas volvunt et spernit et expetit undas.  
at cum summotus lunaribus incrementis  
ipse Garunna suos in dorsa recolligit aestus,  
praecipiti fluctu raptim redit atque videtur  
in fontem iam non refluxus sed defluus ire. 110  
tum recipit laticem quamvis minor ille minorem  
stagnanti de fratre suum, turgescit et ipse  
Oceano propriasque facit sibi litora ripas.  
hos inter fluvios, uni mage proximus undae, est  
aethera mons rumpens alta spectabilis arce, 115  
plus celso habiturus eros vernamque senatum.  
quem generis princeps Paulinus Pontius olim,  
cum Latius patriae dominabitur, ambiet altis  
moenibus, et celsae transmittent aera turres;  
quarum culminibus sedeant commune micantes 120  
pompa vel auxilium; non illos machina muros,  
non aries, non alta strues vel proximus agger,  
non quae stridentes torquet catapulta molares,

111. minorem *Luetjohann*: minore.

114. uni: *Durani Wilamowitz*.

<sup>1</sup> Oedipus.

<sup>2</sup> The Dordogne.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. by the spring tides.

## XXII. CASTLE OF PONTIUS LEONTIUS

adulterer<sup>1</sup> shall possess himself of his murdered father's bride, to be reckoned brother of his sons, husband of his mother, and stepfather to himself? If thou art fain to go with me, I will tell thee in what land we should make our joint habitation.

“There is a place where two rivers, the Garunna, sped whirling down from a dripping mountain-crag, and the mossy Duranius,<sup>2</sup> which rushes with like swoop to the plain and at last flows out from a bend in its sandy channel, gradually commingle their slowing streams. Here the sea rushes up against the current and with constant coming and going repels or courts the waters that the rivers roll down. But when the Garunna, repulsed by the waxing of the moon,<sup>3</sup> once more gathers its own tidal flood upon its back, then it returns, speeding in headlong billows, and now seems to flow, not backwards, but downwards to its source. Then even the Duranius, though as the lesser it receives from its flooding brother but a lesser share of the water, is likewise swollen by the ocean, and its banks become sea-shores. Between these rivers, but nearer to one than to the other, there is a mountain piercing the sky, conspicuous in its towering height but destined to have owners still more elevated and to be the birthplace of senators. Some day, when his land shall be under Latin sway, Paulinus Pontius, the founder of the family, shall surround that hill with walls, and the towers shall soar beyond earth's atmosphere; thus on their summits shall rest, shining with a common radiance, the two lights of Stateliness and Succour. Those walls no engine, no battering-ram, no high-piled structure or near-built mound, no catapult hurling the hissing stones,

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sed nec testudo nec vinea nec rota currens  
 iam positis scalis umquam quassare valebunt. 125  
 cernere iam videor quae sint tibi, Burge, futura  
 (diceris sic); namque domus de flumine surgunt  
 splendentesque sedent per propugnacula thermae.  
 hic cum vexatur piceis aquilonibus aestus,  
 scrupus asprata latrare crepidine punex 130  
 incipit; at fractis saliens e cautibus altum  
 excutitur torrens ipsisque aspergine tectis  
 impluit ac tollit nautas et saepe iocoso  
 ludit naufragio; nam tempestate peracta  
 destituit refluens missas in balnea classes. 135  
 ipsa autem quantis, quibus aut sunt fulta columnis!  
 cedat puniceo pretiosus livor in antro  
 Synnados, et Nomadum qui portat eburnea saxa  
 collis et herbosis quae vernant marmora venis;  
 candentem iam nolo Paron, iam nolo Caryston; 140  
 vilior est rubro quae pendet purpura saxo.  
 "Et ne posteritas dubitet quis conditor extet,  
 fixus in introitu lapis est; hic nomina signat  
 auctorum; sed propter aqua, et vestigia pressa  
 quae rapit et fuso detergit gurgite caenum. 145

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<sup>1</sup> This has wrongly been taken as a reference to nautical sports such as are described in *Epist.* II. 2. 19; but Sidonius merely says that there is a gap between rocks through which water flows from the river into the baths, which are built on the bank. When a storm arises boats are sometimes driven through this inlet right into the baths, where they are apt to have ridiculous experiences.

<sup>2</sup> For these marbles see 5. 34-39 nn.

<sup>3</sup> The next eight lines are desperately obscure. Sidonius is writing to one who knew the house, and he is more intent on ingenious conceits than on intelligibility. *Paries* (146) is possibly the front wall of the house, on the inner side of which is the atrium. The decorative slabs (*vv.* 146 f.) are on the inside of the wall. *Vv.* 150-155 describe the atrium, which

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no tortoise-roof, no mantlet, no wheel rushing onwards with ladders already in position shall ever have power to shake. Methinks I see the future that is in store for thee, O Castle (for so thou shalt be called). The house rises from the river's brim and gleaming baths are set within the circuit of the battlements: here when the surging waters are troubled by the murky north-wind, the eaten, jagged rock sends forth a roar from the scarred bank; then from a cleft in the crags a torrent leaps forth and is shot aloft, showering spray on to the very roofs; it lifts up men in boats and often mocks them with a sportive shipwreck; for when the storm is over the flood retreats and strands whole fleets that have been forced up into the baths.<sup>1</sup> But the columns that support the baths, of what manner and size are they? Before them must bow the costly dark hue in the purple quarry of Synnada and the Numidian hill that bears stones like ivory and the marble that burgeons with grass-like veins; henceforth I spurn gleaming Paros and Carystos; poorer now seems the purple suspended in the blushing rock.<sup>2</sup>

"Lest posterity should be uncertain whom the building boasts as its stablisher, a stone is set in the ground at the entrance with the names of the founders clearly graven upon it; and there is water near at hand which clears away all footprints and wipes off all mud with its flooding stream. <sup>3</sup>The

is crescent-shaped (*lunata atria*, 157). With much diffidence I have made two alterations in the text. The meaning may be that a *porticus duplex*, i.e. a double row of pillars, runs straight through from the entrance, thus dividing the floor into "two floor-spaces." At the far end the two rows bend round in opposite directions, following the rounded wall until they come near to the *paries* from which they started. Then

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sectilibus paries tabulis crustatus ad aurea  
 tecta venit, fulvo nimis abscondenda metallo;  
 nam locuples fortuna domus non passa latere  
 divitias prodit, cum sic sua culmina celat.  
 haec post assurgit duplicemque supervenit aream 150  
 porticus ipsa duplex, duplici non cognita plaustro;  
 quam rursum molli subductam vertice curvae  
 obversis paulum respectant cornibus alae.  
 ipsa diem natum cernit sinuamine dextro,  
 fronte videns medium, laevo visura cadentem. 155  
 non perdit quicquam trino de cardine caeli  
 et totum solem lunata per atria servat.  
 sacra tridentiferi Iovis hic armenta profundo  
 Pharnacis immergit genitor; percussa securi  
 corpora cornipedum certasque rubescere plagas 160  
 sanguineo de rore putes; stat vulneris horror  
 verus, et occisis vivit pictura quadrigis.  
 Ponticus hinc rector numerosis Cyzicon armis  
 claudit; at hinc sociis consul Lucullus opem fert,  
 compulsusque famis discrimina summa subire 165  
 invidet obsesso miles Mithridaticus hosti.  
 enatat hic pelagus Romani militis ardor  
 et chartam madido transportat corpore siccam.

150. aream *ego* : aedem.

152. quam rursum *ego* : quarum unam.

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each row turns inward for a short distance (*obversis* = "turning athwart" or "turning so as to face one another"), and thus "looks back upon" the "double colonnade." The winding pillars on each side form the *alae*. Sidonius welcomed the word because it made a ludicrous combination with *cornibus* ("wings" and "horns"). *Duplici* . . . *plaustro* means "not exposed to the north."



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house-wall is faced with slabs of cut marble up to the gilded ceiling, which is right fitly concealed by the yellow metal, for the rich prosperity of the house, brooking no secrecy, reveals its wealth when thus it hides its roof. Behind this part there soars, passing high above a double floor, a colonnade likewise double, unknown to the double Wain. This again diverges gently backward, and finally these curving wings turn their horns inward for a little way, and so look back upon it. Its right bend sees the dawn, its front the noonday light, its left the fading day. It loses none of these three quarters of the heavens, but preserves the whole of the sun in the crescent hall. There can be seen the father of Pharnaces plunging into the deep the horses sacrificed to the trident-bearing Jove<sup>1</sup>; you would think the bodies of the steeds had in very truth been smitten by the axe and that real gashes were reddening with spurts of blood; each ghastly wound seems true, and that slain team makes the picture live. Next is seen on one side the ruler of Pontus beleaguering Cyzicus with multitudinous host; but on the other side Lucullus brings aid, and the warriors of Mithridates, forced to undergo the direst straits of hunger, envy their besieged foe. Here a bold Roman soldier is swimming to land, carrying across the water a scroll all dry despite his dripping body.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Appian, *Bell. Mith.* c. 70, says that Mithridates, before proceeding against Cotta in 74 B.C., sacrificed a chariot team of four horses by flinging them into the sea, but he does not say that the horses were first slaughtered. The "trident-bearing Jove" is Neptune.

<sup>2</sup> For this story see Flor. I. 40 (III. 5) 16.

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" Desuper in longum porrectis horrea tectis  
 crescunt atque amplis angustant fructibus aedes. 170  
 huc veniet calidis quantum metit Africa terris,  
 quantum vel Calaber, quantum colit Apulus acer,  
 quanta Leontino turgescit messis acervo,  
 quantum Mygdonio committunt Gargara sulco,  
 quantum, quae tacitis Cererem venerata choreis, 175  
 Attica Triptolemo civi condebat Eleusin,  
 cum populis hominum glandem linquentibus olim  
 fulva fruge data iam saecula fulva perirent.  
 porticus ad gelidos patet hinc aestiva triones;  
 hinc calor innocuus thermis hiemalibus exit 180  
 atque locum in tempus mollit; quippe illa rigori  
 pars est apta magis; nam quod fugit ora Leonis,  
 inde Lycaoniae rabiem male sustinet Vrsae.  
 arcis at in thermas longe venit altior amnis  
 et cadit in montem patulisque canalibus actus 185  
 circumfert clausum cava per divortia flumen.  
 occiduum ad solem post horrea surgit opaca  
 quae dominis hiberna domus: strepit hic bona flamma  
 appositas depasta trabes; sinuata camino  
 ardentis perit unda globi fractoque flagello 190  
 spargit lentatum per culmina tota vaporem.  
 continuata dehinc videas quae conditor ausus  
 aemula Palladiis textrina educere templis.  
 hac celsi quondam coniunx reverenda Leonti,

181. in *add. Mohr.*

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<sup>1</sup> The sun is (or rather was) in Leo in July.

<sup>2</sup> "Falls into (not down or from) the mountain": a characteristically feeble paradox. The meaning is that trenches are dug in the mountain-side to form conduits, and the water falls into them.

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“ Higher up the granaries multiply with their long stretch of buildings and with produce within so abundant that even their vast space is cramped. Hither shall come as great a harvest as is reaped in Africa’s warm fields or cultivated by the Calabrian or the brisk Apulian, as rich a crop as swells for the stacks of Leontini, or as Gargarus commits to its Lydian furrow, or as Attic Eleusis, that worshipped Ceres with mystic dances, used to garner for her citizen Triptolemus, when long ago the tribes of mankind renounced the acorn and the golden age was perishing now that the golden grain was given. Then there is a summer portico exposed on one side to the chill north: at the other end a harmless warmth comes out from the winter baths and tempers the air of the place when the season requires; so this end is best suited to the cold weather; for the part that fights shy of the Lion’s mouth<sup>1</sup> is thereby unfitted to endure the rage of Lycaon’s Bear. Into the warm baths of the mansion comes a stream from far above, which falls into the mountain,<sup>2</sup> being forced through open channels till at last it circulates its waters under cover through divergent tunnels. Behind the shaded granaries there rises toward the west a structure that is the winter home of the master and mistress; here a goodly fire crackles, which devours the great logs that are piled near at hand; the glowing cloud that comes forth in billows curls upward from the stove, then fades away, and with its blast now broken it spreads a mitigated heat all over the roof. Joined to the room may be seen the weaving-chambers, which the founder dared to build in a style that vied with the temples of Pallas. Some day it shall be blazoned

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qua non ulla magis nurus umquam Pontia gaudet 195  
 inlustris pro sorte viri, celebrabitur aede  
 vel Syrias vacuasse colus vel serica fila  
 per cannas torsisse leves vel stamine fulvo  
 praegnantis fusi mollitum nesse metallum.  
 parietibus posthinc rutilat quae machina iunctis 200  
 fert recutitorum primordia Iudacorum.  
 perpetuum pictura micat; nec tempore longo  
 depretiata suas turpant pigmenta figuras.

“Flecteris ad laevam: te porticus accipit ampla  
 directis curvata viis, ubi margine summo 205  
 pendet et artatis stat saxea silva columnis.  
 alta volubilibus patet hic cenatio valvis;  
 fusilis euripus propter; cadit unda superne  
 ante fores pendente lacu, venamque secuti  
 undosa inveniunt nantes cenacula pisces. 210  
 comminus erigitur vel prima vel extima turris;  
 mos erit hic dominis hibernum sigma locare.  
 huius conspicuo residens in culmine saepe  
 dilectum nostris Musis simul atque capellis  
 aspiciam montem; lauri spatior in istis 215  
 frondibus, hic trepidam credam mihi credere  
 Daphnen.

iam si forte gradus geminam convertis ad Arcion  
 ut venias in templa dei qui maximus ille est,

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<sup>1</sup> The distaff is called “Syrian” because the lady is working with wool already dyed in Syrian purple.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps rather “on the extreme edge is perched” (cf. *collis margine*, 24. 66). The “forest of columns” was perhaps built on an overhanging ledge at one end of the hill.

<sup>3</sup> Sidonius plays on the literal meaning of *cenaculum*, “dining-room,” and the derived meaning, “upper chamber.”

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forth by fame that in this sanctuary the worshipful lady of the great Leontius, than whom no other wife of the Pontian house ever rejoiced more in her husband's illustrious rank, stripped the Syrian<sup>1</sup> distaff and twisted the silken strands along the light reeds and spun the pliant metal, making the spindle swell with thread of gold. Next to this, with wall abutting, there stands a resplendent structure, which shows depicted the beginnings of the circumcised Jews. The brightness of the picture is everlasting: time brings no degeneration in the colours to mar the painted forms.

"You turn left, and a spacious colonnade receives you, its shape curved but its passages straight. To the extreme edge clings<sup>2</sup> a crowded forest of close-set columns. Here is built a lofty dining-room with folding-doors. A conduit of cast metal is near; there is a suspended tank in front of the door: into it the water falls from above, and fishes, advancing with the flow, find the end of their swimming in an upper room—but a watery one.<sup>3</sup> Close at hand rises the first, or, if it please you better, the last of the towers. There the masters of the house will be wont to set their dining-couch in winter. Often-times on its far-seen roof will I sit and view that mountain beloved by my Muses and by the goats; I will walk amid those laurel boughs, and there I shall believe that the timorous Daphne believes in me. Then if you chance to turn your steps towards the two Bears to reach the temple of that God who is greatest of all, you find the wine-

The tank is a *cenaculum* in the latter sense, but fishes generally find the end of their career in a *cenaculum* of the other sort.

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deliciis redolent iunctis apotheca penusque;  
hic multus tu, frater, eris. 220

“Iam divide sedem,  
cessurus mihi fonte meo, quem monte fluentem  
umbrat multicavus spatioso circite fornix.  
non eget hic cultu, dedit huic natura decorem.  
nil fictum placuisse placet, non pompa per artem  
ulla, resultanti non comet malleus ictu 225  
saxa, nec exesum supplebunt marmora tofum.  
hic fons Castaliae nobis vice sufficit undae.  
cetera dives habe; colles tua iura tremiscant;  
captivos hic solve tuos, et per iuga Burgi  
laeta relaxatae fiant vineta catenae.” 230

Confirmat vocem iamiam prope sobrius istam  
Silenus, pariterque chori cecinere faventes:  
“Nysa, vale Bromio, Phoebo, Parnase bivertex.  
non istum Naxus, non istum Cirrha requirat,  
sed mage perpetuo Burgus placitura petatur.” 235

5. Ecce, quotiens tibi libuerit pateris capacioribus  
hilarare convivium, misi quod inter scyphos et  
amystidas tuas legas. subveneris verecundiae meae,  
si in sobrias aures ista non venerint; nec iniuria hoc  
ac secus atque aequum est flagito, quandoquidem  
Baccho meo iudicium decemvirale passuro tem-  
pestivius quam convenit tribunal erigitur. 6. si

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<sup>1</sup> As *Bacchus* is used in poetry for “wine,” there is a double meaning here.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Delphi.

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store and the larder fragrant with mingled delights. This place will see much of you, my brother.<sup>1</sup>

“Now agree upon a division of haunts: you shall leave to me my spring, which flows from the mountain, shadowed by an arched covering of ample circuit, much pitted. This needs no embellishment, for Nature has given it beauty. It seems good to me that there no counterfeiting should seem good; no artificial splendour there; no hammer with re-echoing blow shall dress those stones, no marble workmanship take the place of the weather-worn tuff. That spring contents me instead of Castalia’s fountain. All else you may have to enrich you: the hills may tremble before your power; here set your captives free, and may their loosened bonds become joyous vineyards all over the Castle’s hilly slopes!”

Silenus, now all but sober, confirmed this utterance, and the bands of revellers likewise sang their approval: “Nysa, Bromius bids thee farewell; twin-crested Parnassus, Phoebus bids farewell to thee. Let Naxos no longer seek the one or Cirrha<sup>2</sup> the other, but rather let the Castle be our goal, to give delight for evermore.”

5. See, I have sent you something to read amid your bumpers and wassailings whenever you choose to cheer the feast with extra-large cups. You will save my blushes if these lines do not find their way to sober ears. This is not an unlawful or an inequitable demand on my part, since the treatment I deprecate amounts to setting up a premature tribunal for my Bacchus, where he would be subjected to a judgment of decemviral severity. 6. Again, should

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quis autem carmen prolixius eatenus duxerit esse culpandum, quod epigrammatis excesserit paucitatem, istum liquido patet neque balneas Etrusci neque Herculem Surrentinum neque comas Flavii Earini neque Tibur Vopisci neque omnino quicquam de Papinii nostri silvulis lectitasse; quas omnes descriptiones vir ille praeiudicatissimus non distichorum aut tetrastichorum stringit angustiis, sed potius, ut lyricus Flaccus in artis poeticae volumine praecipit, multis isdemque purpureis locorum communium pannis semel inchoatas materias decenter extendit. haec me ad defensionis exemplum posuisse sufficiat, ne haec ipsa longitudinis deprecatio longa videatur. vale.

### XXIII

#### AD CONSENTIVM

Cum iam pro meritis tuis pararem,  
Consenti, columen decusque morum,  
vestrae laudibus hospitalitatis  
cantum impendere pauperis cicutae,  
ultro in carmina tu tubam recludens  
converso ordine versibus citasti  
suetum ludere sic magis sodalem.  
paret Musa tibi, sed impudentem

5

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<sup>1</sup> These poems are numbered respectively I. 5, III. 1, III. 4, and I. 3 in the *Silvae* of Statius.

<sup>2</sup> Hor. *A. P.* 15, *purpureus, late qui splendeat, unus et alter adsuitur pannus.*



### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

anyone consider that such a lengthy poem deserves censure for going beyond the brevity of an epigram, it is perfectly clear that he has not been in the habit of reading the "Baths of Etruscus" or the "Hercules of Surrentum" or the "Locks of Flavius Earinus" or the "Tiburtine Home of Vopiscus,"<sup>1</sup> or indeed anything from the little "Silvae" of our Statius; for that man of most assured reputation does not cramp any of these descriptions within the narrow limits of two-lined or four-lined poems, but rather does what the lyric poet Horace enjoins in the "Art of Poetry": once he has introduced his subject, he appropriately enlarges it by the repeated use of stock "purple patches."<sup>2</sup> Let this suffice as a specimen of my self-defence, lest this justification of length should itself seem too long. Farewell.

### XXIII TO CONSENTIUS

Consentius,<sup>3</sup> pillar and ornament of manners, I was already preparing to devote the strains of my poor reed to the praises of your hospitality, as you well deserve, when you forestalled me and, reversing the order of things, brought out your trumpet and in verses challenged your old crony, who is more used to that kind of pastime, to produce a poem. Well, the Muse answers your call, but she

<sup>3</sup> Consentius of Narbonne, to whom *Epist.* VIII. 4 is addressed, is mentioned as a poet in *Epist.* IX. 15. 1, *carm.* 22 sqq. The present poem cannot have been written before A.D. 462, when Theodoric II occupied Narbonne (*vv.* 69-73), or after 466, when he was murdered. See *Introd.*, p. lvii.

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multo cautius hinc stilum movebit ; nam cum carmina postules diserte, suades scribere, sed facis tacere.	10
nuper quadrupedante cum citato ires Phocida Sestiasque Baias, inlustres titulisque proeliisque urbes per duo consulum tropaea, (nam Martem tulit ista Iulianum et Bruto duce nauticum furorem, ast haec Teutonicas cruenta pugnas, erectum et Marium cadente Cimbro),	15
misisti mihi multiplex poema, doctum, nobile, forte, delicatum. ibant hexametri superbientes et vestigia iuncta, sed minora, per quinos elegi pedes ferebant ; misisti et, triplicis metrum trochaei	20
spondeo comitante dactyloque, dulces hendecasyllabos, tuumque blando faenore Sollium ligasti. usuram petimurque reddimusque ; nam quod carmine pro tuo rependo, hoc centesima laudium tuarum est.	25
Quid primum venerer colamque pro te ? ni fallor, patriam patremque iuxta ; qui quamquam sibi vindicare summum possit iure locum, tamen necesse est illam vincere quae parit parentes.	30
salve, Narbo potens salubritate, urbe et rure simul bonus videri,	35

### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

will move her shameless pen much more cautiously on this account; for in making such an eloquent demand for a song you urge one to write but constrain one to be silent. Lately, when on galloping steed you were travelling to Phocis<sup>1</sup> and the Sestian Baiae, cities conspicuous in the records of the great and famed for battles through the trophies won by two consuls (for the first of these towns bore the brunt of Caesar's armed might and the frenzy of a navy under Brutus'<sup>2</sup> command, the other, bathed in blood, endured the Teuton fray, with Marius proudly standing as the Cimbrian fell), you sent me a manifold poem, skilful, striking, powerful, exquisite. Hexameters marched in their pride, and elegiacs advanced beside them, but with lesser steps that covered but five feet. You sent also graceful hendecasyllables, where spondee and dactyl accompany three trochees, and you have put your Sollius in a charming debt. Now I am asked for interest, and pay it; what I am now disbursing in consideration of your poem is one per cent. of the praises due to you.

To what must I first pay reverence and worship on account of you? To your fatherland, methinks, and after that to your father. He might indeed justly claim the first place for himself, but the parent of parents must needs have precedence. Hail, Narbo, surpassing in thy healthiness, gladdening the eye with thy town and thy countryside alike, with thy

<sup>1</sup> *Phocida* = *Massiliam* (Marseilles), a colony of Phocaea. This confusion of Phocis and Phocaea is probably borrowed from Lucan (III. 340, V. 53), though it occurs elsewhere. The "Sestian Baiae" is *Aquae Sextiae* (Aix) founded by C. Sextius Calvinus in 122 B.C., and renowned for its warm springs.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Decimus Brutus.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

<p>                     muris, civibus, ambitu, tabernis,                      portis, porticibus, foro, theatro,                      delubris, capitoliis, monetis,                      thermis, arcubus, horreis, macellis,                      pratis, fontibus, insulis, salinis,                      stagnis, flumine, merce, ponte, ponto;                      unus qui venerere iure divos                      Lenaeum, Cererem, Palem, Minervam                      spicis, palmite, pascuis, trapetis.                      solis fise viris nec expetito                      naturae auxilio procul relictis                      promens montibus altius cacumen,                      non te fossa patens nec hispidarum                      objectu sudium coronat agger;                      non tu marmora bratteam vitrumque,                      non testudinis Indicae nitorem,                      non si quas eboris trabes refractis                      rostris Marmarici dedere barri                      figis moenibus aureasque portas                      exornas asaroticis lapillis;                      sed per semirutas superbus arces,                      ostendens veteris decus duelli,                      quassatos geris ictibus molares,                      laudandis pretiosior ruinis.                      sint urbes aliae situ minaces,                      quas vires humiles per alta condunt,                      et per praecipites locata cristas                      numquam moenia caesa glorientur:                      tu pulsate places fidemque fortem                      oppugnatio passa publicavit.                      Hinc te Martius ille rector atque                      magno patre prior, decus Getarum,                      Romanae columnen salusque gentis,                      Theudoricus amat sibi que fidum                 </p>	<p>40</p> <p>45</p> <p>50</p> <p>55</p> <p>60</p> <p>65</p> <p>70</p>
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### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

walls, citizens, circuit, shops, gates, porticoes, forum, theatre, shrines, capitol, mint, baths, arches, granaries, markets, meadows, fountains, islands, salt-mines, ponds, river, merchandise, bridge and brine; thou who hast the best title of all to worship as thy gods Bacchus, Ceres, Pales and Minerva in virtue of thy corn, thy vines, thy pastures, and thine olive-mills! Thou hast put thy trust in thy men alone, and seeking no aid from Nature thou dost soar to heights that leave mountains far behind. No gaping fosse, no mound with its barrier of bristling stakes surrounds thee; no marble workmanship, no gilding or glass, no shining Indian tortoiseshell, no bars of ivory broken off from the mouths of Marmaric elephants dost thou fix upon thy walls; thou adornest no golden gates with mosaic; but proud among thy half-demolished strongholds thou dost display thy glory won in the old war, and though thy great stones have been battered down thou art prized more highly for those glorious ruins.<sup>1</sup> Let other cities menace by their sites—cities built on high by lowly powers; let walls set on precipitous ridges boast that they have never been felled; as for thee, shattered as thou art thou dost win favour; the widespread fame of that assault hath made thy staunch loyalty renowned.

Hence that martial ruler, the superior even of his great sire, glorious ornament of the Goths, pillar and saviour of the Roman race, Theodoric, loves thee, and

<sup>1</sup> For the attack on Narbo by Theodoric I see n. on 7. 475. It is not certain that Theodoric II met with resistance when he occupied the town in A.D. 462. Sidonius seems here to attribute all the damage to "the old war." In *Carm. 22 epist.* 1 he seems to imply recent fighting, but the reference may be merely to warlike preparations.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

adversos probat ante per tumultus.  
sed non hinc videre forte turpis,  
quod te machina crebra perforavit; 75  
namque in corpore fortium virorum  
laus est amplior amplior cicatrix.

in castris Marathoniis merentem  
vulnus non habuisse grande probrum est;  
inter Publicolas manu feroces 80  
trunco Mucius eminet lacerto;  
vallum Caesaris opprimente Magno  
inter tot facies ab hoste tutas  
luscus Scaeva fuit magis decorus.  
laus est ardua dura sustinere; 85  
ignavis, timidis et improbatis  
multum fingitur otiosa virtus.

Quid quod Caesaribus ferax creandis,  
felix prole virum, simul dedisti  
natos cum genitore principantes? 90  
nam quis Persidis expeditionem  
aut victricia castra praeteribit  
Cari principis et perambulatum  
Romanis legionibus Niphaten,  
tum cum fulmine captus imperator 95  
vitam fulminibus parem peregit?

His tu civibus, urbe, rure pollens  
Consenti mihi gignis alme patrem,

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<sup>1</sup> After the fighting at Dyrrhachium it was found that the shield of Caesar's centurion, Scaeva, was pierced in 120 places (Caes. *B.C.* III. 53. 4). Lucan devotes a long passage (VI. 140-262) to his extraordinary feats.

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from thy fierce resistance of yore he gains assurance of thy present loyalty. And thou canst not be considered unsightly because many an engine of war hath pierced thee, for on the body of the brave the greater the scar, the greater the honour. In the campaign of Marathon it was a sore disgrace for a soldier to have had no wound. Amid the Publicolae with their bold hands Mucius with his maimed arm shone conspicuous. When Magnus was overwhelming Caesar's rampart, then amid a multitude of faces unharmed by the enemy Scaeva<sup>1</sup> with one eye lost was comelier than all. Hard to win is the glory of enduring adversity; it is the indolent, the coward and the dastard that are wont to feign prowess without toil.

Nor is this all. Fruitful mother of Caesars and blest in an offspring of heroes, thou didst give us at one time father and sons<sup>2</sup> holding imperial sway together. Who shall leave unmentioned the campaign against Persia or the victorious warfare of Carus our prince and the marching of Roman legions over Niphates at that time when the Emperor was overwhelmed by lightning and a life that was itself like lightning met its end?

Strong in such citizens and in thy city and thy countryside, thou didst graciously bless me by bringing to life the father of Consentius, a man in

<sup>2</sup> Referring to the Emperor Carus (A.D. 282-283) and his sons Carinus and Numerianus, who were associated with him as Caesars and succeeded him as joint rulers (283-4). Carus seems to have been born not at Narbo (Narbonne) but at Narbona, or rather Narona, in Illyria. The cause of his death on his Persian expedition may have been assassination, not lightning.

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illum cui nitidi sales rigorque Romanus fuit Attico in lepore.	100
hunc Miletius et Thales stupere auditum potuit simulque Lindi est notus qui Cleobulus inter arces, et tu qui, Periandre, de Corintho es, et tu quem dederat, Bias, Priene,	105
et tu, Pittace, Lesbios sophistes, et tu qui tetricis potens Athenis vincis Socraticas, Solon, palaestras, et tu, Tyndareis satus Therapnis, Chilon, legifero prior Lycurgo.	110
non hic, si voluit vacante cursus, quis sit sideribus notare cursus, diversas Arato vias cucurrit; non hunc, cum geometricas ad artes mentem composuit, sequi valebat	115
Euclides spatium sciens Olympi; non hunc, si voluit rotare rhythmos, quicquam proposito virum morari Chrysippus potuisset ex acervo.	120
hic cum Amphioniae studebat arti plectro, pollice, voce tibiaque, Thrax vates, deus Arcas atque Phoebus omni carmine post erant et ipsas Musas non ita musicas putares.	125
hic si syrmate cultus et cothurno intrasset semel Atticum theatrum, cessissent Sophocles et Euripides;	

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<sup>1</sup> The meaning is that Chrysippus, who solved, or rather dismissed, the problem of the Sorites by arbitrarily choosing a stopping-place, could not have interrupted periods which were so skilfully constructed and rounded off that no break



### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

whom sparkling wit and Roman sternness were set amid Attic elegance. Hearing him Milesian Thales might well have been amazed, and Cleobulus too, renowned among the eminences of Lindus, and Periander of Corinth, and Bias, whom Priene gave to the world, and Pittacus, the Lesbian master of wisdom, and Solon, who ruled grave Athens and surpassed the school of Socrates, and Chilon, scion of Tyndarean Therapnae, a man to be esteemed before Lycurgus the law-giver. This sage of ours, when in times of leisure he chose to mark the courses of the stars, did not stray from the paths that Aratus trod. When he set his mind on the lore of geometry, Euclid, who knew the measure of the heavens, could not have followed him. When he chose to build rhythmical periods, Chrysippus could not have treated them like the Sorites and hindered him from completing each scheme.<sup>1</sup> When he devoted himself to the art of Amphion with quill, thumb, voice and flute, the Thracian bard, the Arcadian god and Phoebus lagged behind him in every kind of song, and the very Muses might be deemed less musical. If clad in long cloak and buskin he had once entered the Athenian theatre, Sophocles and Euripides would have given way before him; if

could be made in the middle of them. The word *acervus* (corresponding to Greek *σωρός*, from which comes *σωπελῆς*) is used also by Cicero, *Ac.* II. 49, and Horace, *Epist.* II. 1. 47, in connexion with the fallacy of the Sorites; see Reid and Wilkins respectively on the passages just cited. The Sorites took various forms; the simplest form is represented by the question "How many grains make a heap? Does one?" The answerer would then be led on to add one, then another one, and so on, and the process would end in his discomfiture.



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again he had chosen to write comedies and make the stage resound with the sock, Menander would have lifted an appealing finger and yielded him the palm. When he skilfully embellished the six-footed style after the manner of Smyrna's school,<sup>1</sup> or when he devoted himself to austere history, Homer with his thunder and Herodotus with his rushing flow were scarcely able to keep the first place. Not above him would that stormy orator have been ranked who in olden times was wont to sway the theatre in Pandion's town by his art, whether he launched himself against the one-eyed Philip or pled insistently the cause of Ctesiphon,—a man ever advancing in favour and justly placed on the topmost pinnacle of oratory, a smith's son who preferred to sharpen his tongue to a fine edge.<sup>2</sup> Why should I sing of the masters of Latin utterance,<sup>3</sup> the man of Arpinum, the man of Padua, the bard of Mantua, Terence, producer of comedies, Plautus, who though born in a serious age surpasses by his brightness the wit of the Greeks; Varro, too, right worshipful for the many-sided multitudinousness of his books, Crispus, master of brevity, Cornelius Tacitus, whom by reason of his fertile genius no tongue must tacitly ignore, Arbiter,<sup>4</sup> whose *Gardens of Massilia* make him the peer of the

<sup>1</sup> 2. 187 sq. n.

<sup>2</sup> With this descriptive catalogue of Latin writers cf. 2. 182-192.

<sup>4</sup> Referring to Petronius Arbiter. The extant remains of his *Satyricon* do not enable us to explain *hortos Massil.*, though there is evidence that Massilia was mentioned in that work. The hero, Encolpius, is dogged by the wrath of Priapus, who was worshipped especially at Lampsacus, on the Hellespont (cf. 9. 174). The "sacred tree-stock" refers to the rude wooden images of Priapus. For a fuller discussion see *Class. Quart.*, loc. cit. p. 22.

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- Hellespontiaco parem Priapi,  
 et te carmina per libidinosa  
 notum, Naso tener, Tomosque missum,  
 quondam Caesareae nimis puellae 160  
 ficto nomine subditum Corinnae?  
 quid celsos Senecas loquar vel illum  
 quem dat Bilbilis alta Martialem,  
 terrarum indigenas Hibericarum?  
 quid quos duplicibus iugata taedis 165  
 Argentaria Polla dat poetas?  
 quid multos varii stili retexam?  
 arguti, teneri, graves, dicaces,  
 si Consentius adfuit, latebant.
- Huic summi ingenii viro simulque 170  
 summae nobilitatis atque formae  
 iuncta est femina quae domum ad mariti  
 prisci insignia transferens Iovini  
 implevit trabeis larem sophistae.  
 sic intra proprios tibi penates, 175  
 Consenti, patriae decus superbum,  
 fastis vivit avus paterque libris.
- Haec per stemmata te satis potentem,  
 morum culmine sed potentiozem,  
 non possim merita sonare laude, 180  
 nec si me Odrysio canens in antro,  
 qua late trepidantibus fluentis  
 cautes per Ciconum resultat Hebrus,  
 princeps instituisset ille vatium,  
 cum dulces animata saxa chordae 185

157. Priapi ego : Priapo. *Vid. Class. Quart., loc. cit. p. 22.*  
 166. pallidat *codl.*

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<sup>1</sup> There is no ground for this identification of Ovid's Corinna with Julia, daughter of Augustus, or for the suggestion that his relations with Julia were the cause of his banishment.

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dweller of the Hellespont as worshipper of the sacred tree-stock, Priapus; and languishing Ovid, famed for his lascivious poems and banished to Tomi, too much erstwhile the slave of Caesar's daughter, whom he called by the feigned name of Corinna?<sup>1</sup> Why cite the great Senecas, or Martial, given to the world by lofty Bilbilis—all natives of Spanish lands? Why speak of the poets whom Argentaria Polla, twice yoked in wedlock, presents to us?<sup>2</sup> Why rehearse the names of many masters of divers styles? Tune-ful, melting, grave or witty, if Consentius appeared they shrank into obscurity.

To this man supreme alike in genius, nobility, and comeliness, was linked a lady who brought to her husband's home the trappings of honour worn by Jovinus of old and filled the dwelling of a scholar with robes of state.<sup>3</sup> Thus within your walls, Consentius, proud glory of your country, your grandfather still lives on by the lustre of his dignities and your father by his books.

<sup>4</sup> Mighty as you are through this lineage, and yet mightier by your lofty character, I could not sound your praises worthily even if the great father of bards, singing in Odrysian cave where Hebrus with his bustling waters re-echoes among the rocks of the Ciconians, had taught me, while the sweet strings by the power of their music drew the animated stones

<sup>2</sup> Lucan and presumably Statius; but the idea that Lucan's widow married Statius has no foundation.

<sup>3</sup> The elder Consentius had married a daughter of the usurper Jovinus (411-413).

<sup>4</sup> With the passage which follows compare 2. 69-74. This is the seventh mention of Orpheus in these poems, and there are nearly as many in the *Epistles*.

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ferrent per Rhodopen trahente cantu et versa vice fontibus ligatis terras currere cogere anhelas, nec non Hismara solibus paterent aurita chelyn expetente silva et nulli resolubiles calori curvata ruerent nives ab Ossa, stantem aut Strymona Bistones viderent, cum carmen rapidus latex sitiret; nec si Peliaco datus bimembri ad Centaurica plectra constitissem, hinnum duplicis timens magistri; nec si me docuisset ille fari, iussus pascere qui gregem est clientis Amphrysi ad fluvium deus bubulcus, quod ferrugineos Cyclopes arcu stravit sub Liparensibus caminis vibrans plus grave fulmen in sagitta.	190
Iam primo tenero calentem ab ortu excepere sinu novem sorores, et te de genetrice vagientem tinxerunt vitrei vado Hippocrenes: tunc, hac mersus aqua, loquacis undae pro fluctu mage litteras bibisti. hinc tu iam puer aptior magistro quidquid rhetoricae institutionis, quidquid grammaticalis aut palaestrae est, sicut iam tener hauseras, vorasti. et iam te aula tulit piusque princeps inter conspicuos statim locavit, consistoria quos habent, tribunos;	205       210   215

207. *texerunt codd.*; vitrei *CPF*: vitreae *T*; cf. 9. 285.

210. hinc *Luetjohann*: tunc.

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adown the slopes of Rhodope and, reversing the order of things, bound rivers fast and forced the land to rush panting along, and Mount Ismarus was laid bare to the sun, as the trees, all ears, hied them towards the lyre, and the snows that no heat could melt fell headlong down from bowing Ossa, and the Bistones saw Strymon standing still, its rushing waters athirst for song; nay, not if I had been given in charge to the twy-formed denizen of Pelion<sup>1</sup> and had taken my place by the Centaur's lyre, dreading the neigh of my double-bodied teacher; nor if I had been taught to give utterance by him who was commanded to feed the flock of his servant by the river Amphrysus,<sup>2</sup> a god turned herdsman because with his bow he laid prostrate the grimy Cyclopes down among the furnaces of Lipara, launching in his arrow a bolt more crushing than theirs.

The moment that your warm infant form saw the light, the nine Sisters welcomed you to their arms, and they took you, a wailing babe, from your mother and dipped you in the crystal pool of Hippocrene. At that moment, when they steeped you in the fount, it was no mere flow of prattling water that you drank, but rather the lore of letters. Hence when you had grown to boyhood and were more fitted for a teacher's care<sup>3</sup> you devoured all the course of rhetoric and of the grammarian's school even as you imbibed it in infancy. Next the Court claimed you and the good Emperor straightway set you among the honourable tribunes of his Consistory<sup>4</sup>; and the

<sup>1</sup> Chiron.

<sup>2</sup> Apollo.

<sup>3</sup> Or perhaps "more capable than your teacher" (so the *Thes. Ling. Lat.*).

<sup>4</sup> He was *tribunus et notarius* under Valentinian III. On this office see *C. M. H.*, I. 38.

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tu Maeotida Caspiasque portas,  
 tu fluxis equitata Bactra Parthis  
 constans intrepidusque sic adires 250  
 ut fastu posito tumentis aulae  
 qui supra satrapas sedet tyrannus  
 ructans semideum propinquitates  
 lunatam tibi flecteret tiaram.  
 tu si publica fata non vetarent 255  
 ut Byrsam peteres vel Africanae  
 telluris Tanaiticum rebellem,  
 confestim posito furore Martis  
 post piratica damna destinaret  
 plenas mercibus institor carinas, 260  
 et per te bene pace restituta  
 non ultra mihi bella navigarent.

Iam si seria forte terminantem  
 te spectacula ceperant theatri,  
 pallesbat chorus omnis histrionum 265  
 tamquam si Arcitenens novemque Musae  
 propter pulpita iudices sederent.  
 coram te Caramallus aut Phabaton  
 clausis faucibus et loquente gestu  
 nutu, crure, genu, manu, rotatu 270  
 toto in schemate vel semel latebit,  
 sive Aeetias et suus Iason  
 inducuntur ibi ferusque Phasis,  
 qui iactos super arva Colcha dentes  
 expavit, fruticante cum duello 275  
 spicis spicula mixta fluctuant;  
 sive prandia quis refert Thyestae  
 seu vestros, Philomela torva, planctus,  
 discerptum aut puerum cibumque factum  
 iamiam coniugis innocentioris; 280

256. ut : et C.



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Maeotid mere and the Caspian gates and Bactra, where the roving Parthians ride, you would have approached so resolute and fearless that the tyrant who sits enthroned above his satraps mouthing boasts of his kinship with demigods would have laid aside the arrogance of his pompous court and bowed his crescent<sup>1</sup> tiara before you. Had the fortunes of Rome allowed you to seek Byrsa and the rebel from the Tanais<sup>2</sup> in Afric's land, the frenzy of war would straightway have been laid aside, and the trader, after all his losses at the hands of pirates, would have begun to dispatch ships laden with merchandise; and thus, peace being firmly restored through you, I should no longer have been troubled with wars afloat on the seas.

And when you chanced to put aside serious concerns and were attracted by the shows of the theatre, the whole company of actors would grow pale, as if the god of the bow and the nine Muses were sitting as judges beside the stage. <sup>3</sup>In your presence a Caramallus or a Phabaton, with his closed lips and his action that speaks through nod, leg, knee, hand, and spin, will for once be unnoticed all through his piece, whether the daughter of Aeëtes and her Jason are being shown, with the barbarous Phasis, that was affrighted at the teeth thrown upon the Colchian field, when a martial host sprouted up amid a surging mass of corn-spikes and spear-heads commingled: or whether the feast of Thyestes is represented or the lamentations of the wild-eyed Philomela or the dismembered boy given as food to the husband who thus at the last became the more innocent of the two:

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2. 51 n.

<sup>2</sup> Geiseric.

<sup>3</sup> The following passage refers to performances of *pantomimi*.

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seu raptus Tyrios Iovemque taurum spreto fulmine fronte plus timendum; seu turris Danaae refertur illic, cum multum pluvio rigata censu est, dans plus aurea furta quam metalla;	285
seu Ledam quis agit Phrygemque ephelum aptans ad cyathos facit Tonanti suco nectaris esse dulciorem; seu Martem simulat modo in catenas missum Lemniacas, modo aut repulso	290
formam imponit apri caputque sactis et tergum asperat hispidisque malis leve incurvat ebur, vel ille fingit hirtam dorsa feram repanda tela attritu adsiduo cacuminantem;	295
seu Perseia virgo vindicata illic luditur harpe coniugali, seu quod carminis atque fabularum clausa ad Pergama dat bilustre bellum. quid dicam citharistrias, choraulas,	300
mimos, schoenobatas, gelasianos cannas, plectra, iocos, palen, rudentem coram te trepidanter explicare? nam circensibus ipse quanta ludis victor gesseris intonante Roma	305
laetam par fuit exarare Musam. Ianus forte suas bifrons Kalendas anni tempora circinante Phoebos sumendas referebat ad curules. mos est Caesaris hic, die bis uno	310
(privatos vocitant) parare ludos.	

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<sup>1</sup> According to one version of the legend Mars in his jealousy changed himself into a wild boar and slew Adonis.

### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

or whether it is the Tyrian ravishment and Jove turned bull, with his chief menace in his brow, for he has flung the thunderbolt aside: or whether the scene is the tower of Danae, when it was drenched with a shower of riches and conferred secret joys more golden than the metal: or whether one plays Leda, or by setting the Phrygian youth to serve the wine-cups makes him sweeter to Jove than the nectar-juice: or whether one counterfeits Mars put in Lemnian chains or again invests him, a lover rejected, with a wild boar's<sup>1</sup> form, roughening his head and back with bristles, curving the smooth ivory upward from his shaggy jaws, and the hairy-backed monster is shown sharpening his up-bent weapons by diligent rubbing: or whether Perseus' maid rescued by her lover's falchion is represented, or such song and story as the ten years' war at beleaguered Pergamum affords. Why should I tell how the harpists, flute-players, mimes, rope-walkers and clowns quail as they display before you their reeds, quills, jests, bouts, and ropes? Nay, it was rather the duty of my Muse to record with joy your own great exploits when you were conqueror at the circensian games amid the thunderous plaudits of Rome.<sup>2</sup>

Phoebus was beginning a new yearly circle, and two-faced Janus was bringing back his Calends, the day when the new magistrates take their seats. It is Caesar's custom to provide games (called "private")

<sup>2</sup> "Rome" must not be taken literally: these games were held at Ravenna, where Valentinian III resided. The description which follows, though by no means without originality, is considerably influenced by Statius, *Theb.* VI. 389 sqq., which describes the chariot-race held at Nemea by the seven chieftains on their way to Thebes.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

tunc coetus iuvenum, sed aulicorum,  
 Elei simulacra torva campi  
 exercet spatiantibus quadrigis.  
 et iam te urna petit cietque raucae 315  
 acclamatio sibilans coronae;  
 tum qua est ianua consulumque sedes,  
 ambit quam paries utrimque senis  
 cryptis carceribusque fornicatus,  
 uno e quattuor axe sorte lecto 320  
 curvas ingrederis premens habenas.  
 id collega tuus simulque vobis  
 pars adversa facit; micant colores,  
 albus vel venetus, virens rubensque,  
 vestra insignia. continent ministri 325  
 ora et lora manus iubasque tortas  
 cogunt flexilibus latere nodis  
 hortanturque obiter iuvantque blandis  
 ultro plausibus et voluptuosum  
 dictant quadrupedantibus furorem. 330  
 illi ad claustra fremunt repagulisque  
 incumbunt simul ac per obseratas  
 transfumant tabulas et ante cursum  
 campus flatibus occupatur absens.  
 impellunt, trepidant, trahunt, repugnant, 335  
 ardescunt, saliunt, timent, timentur,  
 nec gressum cohibent, sed inquieto  
 duratum pede stipitem flagellant.  
 tandem murmure bucinæ strepentis

320. sorte *ego* : forte.

321. fremens *codd.*

<sup>1</sup> i.e. of the Olympic games.

<sup>2</sup> *urna*. The lot assigned to each competitor a particular *carcer*, and hence, on this and similar occasions, a particular chariot, as the chariots and teams were supplied by the Emperor, and were already in their respective *carceres* (v. 331).

### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

twice in that one day. Then a company of young men, all of the Court, goes through a grim mimicry of the field of Elis<sup>1</sup> with four-horse chariots racing over the course. Now the urn<sup>2</sup> demanded you and the whistling cheers of the hoarse onlookers summoned you. Thereupon, in the part where the door is and the seat of the consuls, round which there runs a wall with six vaulted chambers on each side, wherein are the starting-pens, you chose one of the four chariots by lot and mounted it, laying a tight grip on the hanging reins. Your partner<sup>3</sup> did the same, so did the opposing side. Brightly gleam the colours, white and blue, green and red, your several badges. Servants' hands hold mouth and reins and with knotted cords force the twisted manes to hide themselves, and all the while they incite the steeds, eagerly cheering them with encouraging pats and instilling a rapturous frenzy. There behind the barriers chafe those beasts, pressing against the fastenings, while a vapoury blast comes forth between the wooden bars and even before the race the field they have not yet entered is filled with their panting breath. They push, they bustle, they drag, they struggle, they rage, they jump, they fear and are feared; never are their feet still, but restlessly they lash the hardened timber. At last the herald with loud blare

<sup>3</sup> Cf. 362. The four competitors were paired off, and each competitor endeavoured to bring victory to his side by fair means or by means which in modern times would be considered foul. The "colleague" of Consentius apparently tries to force the pace and fluster his opponents in order to leave a clear field for his partner, who conserves the energies of his team until the time comes to make a spurt for victory. In the last lap one of the opposing side tries to help his partner by an egregious foul, with disastrous results.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

suspensas tubicen vocans quadrigas	340
effundit celeres in arva currus.	
non sic fulminis impetus trisulci,	
non pulsa Scythico sagitta nervo,	
non sulcus rapide cadentis astri,	
non fundis Balearibus rotata	345
-umquam sic liquidos poli meatus	
rupit plumbea glandium procella.	
cedit terra rotis et orbitarum	
moto pulvere sordidatur aer;	
instant verberibus simul regentes,	350
iamque et pectora prona de covinno	
extensi rapiuntur et iugales	
trans armos feriunt vacante tergo,	
nec cernas cito, cernuos magistros	
temones mage sufferant an axes.	355
iam vos ex oculis velut volantes	
consumpto spatio patentiore	
campus clauserat artus arte factus,	
per quem longam, humilem duplamque muro	
euripus sibi machinam tetendit.	360
ut meta ulterior remisit omnes,	
fit collega tuus prior duobus,	
qui te transierant; ita ipse quartus	
gyri condicione tum fuisti.	
curae est id mediis, ut ille primus,	365

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<sup>1</sup> It was usual to start the race from a white line made on the course itself; but on this occasion the start is made from the *carceres*. This seems to have been the older method.

<sup>2</sup> *Euripus* is applied to a canal or large tank. In some circuses the long central barrier (*spina*) was filled with water. In earlier times *euripus* was applied to the moat which Julius Caesar built round the interior of the Circus Maximus to protect the spectators when wild beasts were exhibited. This was filled up by Nero.

### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

of trumpet calls forth the impatient teams and launches the fleet chariots into the field.<sup>1</sup> The swoop of forked lightning, the arrow sped by Scythian string, the trail of the swiftly-falling star, the leaden hurricane of bullets whirled from Balearic slings has never so rapidly split the airy paths of the sky. The ground gives way under the wheels and the air is smirched with the dust that rises in their track. The drivers, while they wield the reins, ply the lash; now they stretch forward over the chariots with stooping breasts, and so they sweep along, striking the horses' withers and leaving their backs untouched. With charioteers so prone it would puzzle you to pronounce whether they were more supported by the pole or by the wheels. Now as if flying out of sight on wings, you had traversed the more open part, and you were hemmed in by the space that is cramped by craft, amid which the central barrier has extended its long low double-walled structure.<sup>2</sup> When the farther turning-post freed you all from restraint once more, your partner went ahead of the two others, who had passed you; so then, according to the law of the circling course, you had to take the fourth track.<sup>3</sup> The drivers in the middle were intent

<sup>1</sup> The races were run counter-clockwise; thus the competitors had the spectators on their right and the *spina* on their left. The coveted position was the inside one, *i.e.* the one nearest to the *spina*, which gave the shortest course. On this occasion Consentius' partner has the inside position and Consentius the next. The two opponents get so far ahead of Consentius that they are entitled to move inward in front of him, and he has to change over to the outside position (363 sq.). Having gained this advantage, the two opponents hope that the horses of Consentius' partner will swerve outward far enough to allow one of his enemies to dash in and

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

pressus dexteriore concitatu  
 partem si patefecerit sinistram  
 totas ad podium ferens habenas,  
 curru praetereatur intus acto.  
 tu conamine duplicatus ipso 370  
 stringis quadriiugos et arte summa  
 in gyrum bene septimum reservas;  
 instabant alii manu atque voce,  
 passim et deciduis in arva guttis  
 rectorum alipedumque sudor ibat. 375  
 raucus corda ferit fragor faventum  
 atque ipsis pariter viris equisque  
 fit cursu calor et timore frigus.  
 itur sic semel, itur et secundo,  
 est sic tertius atque quartus orbis; 380  
 quinto circite non valens sequentum  
 pondus ferre prior retorquet axem,  
 quod velocibus imperans quadrigis  
 exhaustos sibi senserat iugales;  
 iam sexto reditu perexplicato 385  
 iamque et praemia flagitante vulgo  
 pars contraria nil timens tuam vim  
 securas prior orbitas terebat,  
 tensis cum subito simul lupatis,  
 tensis pectoribus, pede ante fixo, 390  
 quantum auriga suos solebat ille  
 raptans Oenomaum tremente Pisa,  
 tantum tu rapidos teris iugales.  
 hic compendia flexuosa metae

389. simul ego : sinum. *Vil. Class. Quart., loc. cit. pp. 22 sq.*

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seize the inside position (365-369). In the fifth lap Consentius' partner has to withdraw; thus the opponents secure the two inner tracks. Consentius, acting on the traditional principle



### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

that if haply the first man, embarrassed by a dash of his steeds too much to the right, should leave a space open on the left by heading for the surrounding seats, he should be passed by a chariot driven in on the near side. As for you, bending double with the very force of the effort you keep a tight rein on your team and with consummate skill wisely reserve them for the seventh lap. The others are busy with hand and voice, and everywhere the sweat of drivers and flying steeds falls in drops on to the field. The hoarse roar from applauding partisans stirs the heart, and the contestants, both horses and men, are warmed by the race and chilled by fear. Thus they go once round, then a second time; thus goes the third lap, thus the fourth; but in the fifth turn the foremost man, unable to bear the pressure of his pursuers, swerved his car aside, for he had found, as he gave command to his fleet team, that their strength was exhausted. Now the return half of the sixth course was completed and the crowd was already clamouring for the award of the prizes; your adversaries, with no fear of any effort from you, were scouring the track in front with never a care, when suddenly you tautened the curbs all together, tautened your chest, planted your feet firmly in front, and chafed the mouths of your swift steeds as fiercely as was the wont of that famed charioteer of old when he swept Oenomaus<sup>1</sup> along with him and all Pisa trembled. Hereupon one of the others, clinging to the shortest

that all's fair in the circus, rushes up as close as possible to the inside car as it passes the turning-post, and succeeds in exciting the horses, so that they plunge wildly and take a crooked course. Consentius watches his opportunity, gains the inside position, and dashes ahead (394-399).

<sup>1</sup> Cf. 2. 490 sqq.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

unus dum premit, incitatus a te elatas semel impetu quadrigas iuncto non valuit plicare gyro; quem tu, quod sine lege praeteriret, transisti remanens, ab arte restans.	395
alter dum popularitate gaudet, dexter sub cuneis nimis cucurrit. hunc, dum obliquat iter diuque lentus sero cornipedes citat flagello, tortum tramite transis ipse recto.	400
hic te incautius assecutus hostis sperans anticipasse iam priorem transversum venit impudens in axem; incurvantur equi, proterva crurum intrat turba rotas quaterque terni artantur radii, repleta donec	405
intervalla crepent volubilisque frangat margo pedes; ibi ipse quintus curru praecipitatus obruente montem multiplici facit ruina, turpans prociduum cruore frontem.	410
miscet cuncta fragor resuscitatus, quantum non cyparissifer Lycaeus, quantum non nemorosa tollit Ossa crebras inrequieta per procellas, quantum nec reboant volutae ab Austro	415
Doris Trinacris aut voraginoso	420

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<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* the first-mentioned of the two opponents of Consentius, the one whom Consentius had first passed.

<sup>2</sup> This man's attention had been distracted (*rv.* 400-404) and, seeing Consentius pass him on the inside, he assumed that his own partner, who had occupied that position a moment before, had gone ahead. He then attempted to simplify that partner's path to victory by fouling Consentius' wheel

### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

route round the turning-post, was hustled by you, and his team, carried away beyond control by their onward rush, could no more be wheeled round in a harmonious course. As you saw him pass before you in disorder, you got ahead of him by remaining where you were, cunningly reining up. The other adversary, exulting in the public plaudits, ran too far to the right, close to the spectators; then as he turned aslant and all too late after long indifference urged his horses with the whip, you sped straight past your swerving rival. Then the enemy in reckless haste overtook you and, fondly thinking that the first man<sup>1</sup> had already gone ahead, shamelessly made for your wheel with a sidelong dash.<sup>2</sup> His horses were brought down, a multitude of intruding legs entered the wheels, and the twelve spokes were crowded, until a crackle came from those crammed spaces and the revolving rim shattered the entangled feet; then he, a fifth<sup>3</sup> victim, flung from his chariot, which fell upon him, caused a mountain of manifold havoc, and blood disfigured his prostrate brow. Thereupon arose a riot of renewed shouting such as neither Lycaeus with its cypresses ever raises, nor the forests of Ossa, troubled though they be by many a hurricane; such echoing roar as not even the Sicilian sea, rolled onward in billows by the south wind, gives forth, nor Propontis, whose wild deeps

*Venit* (407) does not mean "dashed against"; Consentius' car could not have won after such an impact. How the blow was eluded and how the horses were brought down we are not told explicitly; indeed the end of the description is so vague that I long understood it to mean that one of the men inadvertently fouled his partner's car; but several things seem to rule out this interpretation.

<sup>3</sup> "a fifth," the other four being the horses.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

quae vallat sale Bosphorum Propontis.  
 hic mox praecipit aequus imperator  
 palmis serica, torquibus coronas  
 coniungi et meritum remunerari, 425  
 victis ire iubens satis pudendis  
 villis versicoloribus tapetas.

Iam vero iuvenalibus peractis  
 quem te praebueris sequente in aevo,  
 intra aulam soceri mei expetitus 430  
 curam cum moderatus es Palati,  
 chartis posterioribus loquemur,  
 si plus temporibus vacat futuris;  
 nunc quam diximus hospitalitatem  
 paucis personet obsequens Thalia. 435

O dulcis domus, o pii penates,  
 quos (res difficilis sibi que discors)  
 libertas simul excolit pudorque!  
 o convivia, fabulae, libelli,  
 risus, serietas, dicacitates, 440  
 occursus, comitatus unus idem,  
 seu delubra dei colenda nobis  
 tecta inlustria seu videnda Livi, 445  
 sive ad pontificem gradus ferendi, 443  
 sive ad culmina Martii Myronis,  
 sive ad doctiloqui Leonis aedes 446  
 (quo bis sex tabulas docente iuris  
 ultro Claudius Appius lateret  
 claro obscurior in decemviratu;  
 at si dicat epos metrumque rhythmis 450

445. *transposuit Luetjohann.*

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<sup>1</sup> Note the plurals; the two members of the winning pair receive the same prizes. One of them had not finished the course, but he had done his best for his side. Thus unselfish "team-work" was encouraged.

### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

are a rampart to the Bosphorus. Next the just emperor ordered silken ribands to be added to the victors' palms and crowns to the necklets of gold,<sup>1</sup> and true merit to have its reward; while to the vanquished in their sore disgrace he bade rugs of many-coloured hair to be awarded.

As for your conduct in after-time, when the days of youth were over, when you were welcomed to the Court of my wife's father and were charged with the oversight of the Palace<sup>2</sup>—of this I will tell in a later writing if the future allows me more free time; but now let my obedient Muse proclaim in a few ringing words the hospitality of which I have made mention.

O charming home, O holy hearth, graced by that double glory, so hard to win, so hard to make one—free speech and modesty! O feasts and talks and books, laughter, seriousness, and witty saws, happy meetings, and fellowship ever the same, whether God's temple was to be reverently honoured by us or the glorious house of Livius<sup>3</sup> was to be visited or our way led to the Bishop<sup>4</sup> or to the towering house of Martius Myro or to the house of the eloquent Leo!<sup>5</sup> (If Leo had been expounding the Twelve Tables of the Law, Appius Claudius would have lain low of his own accord, and in that decemvirate so illustrious he would have been a meaner figure; if, again, Leo should sound an epic strain, guiding

<sup>2</sup> The *cura palatii* entailed the oversight of the palaces and other royal buildings. The holder of this office in the western Empire received the rank of *spectabilis*. In the eastern Empire the *cura palatii* was a very exalted office.

<sup>3</sup> A poet of Narbonne.

<sup>4</sup> Probably Hermes, who succeeded Rusticus in A.D. 462.

<sup>5</sup> See 9. 314 n. Martius Myro is not otherwise known: see n. on 9. 306.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

flectat commaticis tonante plectro,  
 mordacem faciat silere Flaccum,  
 quamvis post satiras lyramque tendat  
 ille ad Pindaricum volare cygnum);  
 seu nos, Magne, tuus favor tenebat, 455  
 multis praedite dotibus virorum,  
 forma, nobilitate, mente, censu  
 (cuius si varios eam per actus,  
 centum et ferrea lasset ora laude,  
 constans, ingeniosus efficaxque, 460  
 prudens arbiter, optimus propinquus,  
 nil fraudans genii sibi vel ulli  
 personas, loca, tempus intuendo);  
 seu nos atria vestra continebant,  
 Marcelline meus, perite legum 465  
 (qui, verax nimis et nimis severus,  
 asper crederis esse nescienti;  
 at si te bene quispiam probavit,  
 noscit quod velit ipse iudicare;  
 nam numquam metuis loqui quod aequum est, 470  
 si te Sulla premat ferusque Carbo,  
 si tristes Marii trucesque Cinnae,  
 et si forte tuum caput latusque  
 circumstent gladii triumvirales);  
 seu nos Limpidii lares habebant, 475  
 civis magnifici virique summi.  
 fraternam bene regulam sequentis;  
 seu nos eximii simul tenebat  
 nectens officiositas Marini,

469. quid *PT.*

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<sup>1</sup> "Pindaric swan"; Hor. *C.* IV. 2. 25: the "Odes" (*lyram*) are those of the first three books.

### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

the metre in brief measured clauses to the thundering note of the lyre, he would force the carping Flaccus to silence, even though that bard after his *Satires* and his *Odes* should strive to soar to the heights of the Pindaric swan.<sup>1</sup>) It was the same when we were entertained by the kindness of Magnus,<sup>2</sup> one who is endowed with many a manly grace, with comeliness, birth, intellect, and wealth; truly, were I to go through the list of his diverse achievements, he would wear out a hundred tongues, even tongues of iron, with the telling of his praise—that man so staunch, so talented, so efficient, wise mediator, best of kinsmen, stinting neither himself nor others of enjoyment, regardful as he ever is of persons, places and seasons. It was the same when we found ourselves in the hall of my own Marcellinus,<sup>3</sup> learned in the law, who being immeasurably truthful and strict is deemed harsh by the ignorant; but if anyone has proved him well, then he knows that our friend's judgment is what he would like his own to be; for Marcellinus is never afraid to utter what is right—nor would he be were Sulla or savage Carbo or gloomy Marii or ferocious Cinna threatening him, or if the swords of the triumvirs flashed about his head and side. It was the same when the home of Limpidius<sup>4</sup> welcomed us; a splendid patriot he and a great man, who follows well his brother's pattern; or it might be that the excellent Marinus<sup>4</sup> with his engaging

<sup>2</sup> Magnus of Narbonne, an eminent Gallo-Roman noble, *praefectus praetorio Galliarum* 458–9, consul 460; father of Magnus Felix (9. 1 n.); identified by Sundwall with the grandson of Agricola and father of Araneola (15. 151 sqq.). See 5. 558; 14, § 2; 24. 90; *Epist.* I. 11. 10.

<sup>3</sup> Mentioned in *Epist.* II. 13. 1.

<sup>4</sup> Limpidius and Marinus are not otherwise known.

# THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

cuius sedulitas sodalitasque 480  
aeterna mihi laude sunt colendae;  
seu quoscumque alios videre fratres  
cordi utrique fuit, quibus vacasse  
laudandam reor occupationem;  
horum nomina cum referre versu 485  
adfectus cupiat, metrum recusat.

Hinc nos ad propriam domum vocabas,  
cum mane exierat novum et calescens  
horam sol dabat alteram secundam.  
hic promens teretes pilas trochosque, 490  
hic talos crepitantibus fritillis  
nos ad verbera iactuum struentes,  
tamquam Naupliades, repertor artis,  
gaudebas hilarem ciere rixam.  
hinc ad balnea, non Neroniana 495  
nec quae Agrippa dedit vel ille cuius  
bustum Dalmaticae vident Salonae,  
ad thermas tamen ire sed libebat  
privato bene praebitas pudori.  
post quas nos tua pocula et tuarum 500  
Musarum medius torus tenebat,  
quales nec statuas imaginesque  
aere aut marmoribus coloribusque  
Mentor, Praxiteles, Scopas dederunt,  
quantas nec Polycletus ipse finxit 505  
nec fit Phidiaco figura caelo.

Sed iam te veniam loquacitati  
quingenti hendecasyllabi precantur.  
tantum, etsi placeat, poema longum est.  
iamiam sufficit, ipse et impeditis 510

492. iactuum ego: tractuum. *Vid. Class. Quart., loc. cit.*  
p. 23.



### XXIII. TO CONSENTIUS

courtesy was likewise entertaining us, a man whose attentiveness and sociableness have earned my everlasting praise. It was just the same if we both took a fancy to visit any other of the brethren, to spare time for whom I deem a glorious occupation; but though my affection would fain record their names in verse, metre forbids.

Afterwards you would bid us to your own home, when the early morning had passed and the sun with its gathering warmth was bringing the second hour to second<sup>1</sup> our wishes. Then you would bring out the shapely balls and hoops or the dice which with rattling box marshal us for the hurtling throw, and like Nauplius' son,<sup>2</sup> inventor of the art, you would exult in the raising of a merry quarrel. Hence to the baths; they were not those of Nero or those given by Agrippa or by him whose tomb Damaetian Salonae views,<sup>3</sup> but we were pleased to go to baths fittingly provided for privacy and modesty. After the bath your cups and a couch in the midst of your Muses would claim us: no statues or likenesses to compare with these were ever fashioned in bronze or marble or colours by Mentor, Praxiteles, or Scopas: Polycletus himself did not mould any so great, nor did Phidias with his chisel.

But now five hundred hendecasyllables crave your pardon for their wordiness. A poem of this size, even if it should please, is too long. Now at last I've had enough of it; and you yourself are finding

<sup>1</sup> *alteram secundam*: for the pun cf. 2. 1. Others would translate "the fourth hour."

<sup>2</sup> Palamedes, the reputed inventor of dice.

<sup>3</sup> Diocletian.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

multum in carmine perlegens amicum,  
dormitantibus otiosorem.

### XXIV

#### PROPEMPTICON AD LIBELLVM

Egressus foribus meis, libelle,  
hanc servare viam, precor, memento,  
quae nostros bene ducit ad sodales,  
quorum nomina sedulus notavi;  
antiquus tibi nec teratur agger, 5  
cuius per spatium satis vetustis  
nomen Caesareum viret columnis;  
sed sensim gradere: et moras habendo  
adfectum celerem moves amicis.

Ac primum Domiti larem severi 10  
intrabis trepidantibus Camenis:  
tam censorius haud fuit vel ille  
quem risisse semel ferunt in aevo;  
sed gaudere potes rigore docto:  
hic si te probat, omnibus placebis. 15  
hinc te suscipiet benigna Brivas,  
sancti quae fovet ossa Iuliani,  
quae dum mortua mortuis putantur,  
vivens e tumulo micat potestas.  
hinc iam dexteriora carpis arva 20  
emensusque iugum die sub uno

---

<sup>1</sup> Milestones. The book is to avoid the high-road.

<sup>2</sup> A *grammaticus*, to whom *Epist.* II. 2 is addressed.

## XXIV. L'ENVOI

it an encumbrance to read through such a long bit of your friend in verse, a friend who is more of an idler than a man in a doze.

## XXIV

### L'ENVOI

When you pass out by my door, little book, pray remember to keep this route; it leads conveniently to some comrades of mine whose names I have carefully put down. Do not tread the old road, through whose whole length the name of Caesar shows bright on very old pillars;<sup>1</sup> go by easy stages: by such slow progress you can call forth prompt affection from our friends.

First of all you shall enter the home of the strict Domitius,<sup>2</sup> where our Muse will be very nervous; for even the man who, they say, laughed only once in his life<sup>3</sup> was not as critical as he. Yet you may take pleasure in his sage severity, for if he approve of you, you will satisfy everybody. Next you shall be taken in hand by kindly Brivas,<sup>4</sup> which cherishes the bones of the holy Julian; those bones are deemed dead by the dead, but a living power flashes forth from that tomb. From here you wind through fields more to the right, and having traversed a hill-ridge on the same day, on the morrow you behold

<sup>1</sup> Marcus Crassus, grandfather of the triumvir. The allegation was first made by Lucilius (1299 sq. Marx).

<sup>2</sup> Brioude (Haute-Loire). St. Julian suffered martyrdom in A.D. 304. The Emperor Avitus was buried in the church at Brioude. "The dead" means those who are "dead in their sins" (*Coloss.* 2. 13; *Ephes.* 2. 1).

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

flavum crastinus aspicias Triobrem;  
 tum terram Gabalum satis nivksam  
 et, quantum indigenae volunt putari,  
 sublimem in puteo videbis urbem. 25  
 hinc te temporis ad mei Laconas  
 Iustinum rapies suumque fratrem,  
 quorum notus amor per orbis ora  
 calcat Pirithoumque Theseumque  
 et fidum rabidi sodalem Orestae. 30  
 horum cum fueris sinu receptus,  
 ibis Trevidon et calumniosis  
 vicinum nimis, heu, iugum Rutenis.  
 hic docti invenies patrem Tonanti,  
 rectorem columenque Galliarum, 35  
 prisci Ferreolum parem Syagri,  
 coniunx Papianilla quem pudico  
 curas participans iuvat labore,  
 qualis nec Tanaquil fuit nec illa  
 quam tu, Tricipitine, procreasti, 40

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<sup>1</sup> Triober, or Triobris, mod. Truyère, tributary of the Oltis (Lot), which is a tributary of the Garonne. The Gabales (or Gabali; also Gabalitani, *Epist.* V. 13. 2, VII. 6. 7) were an Aquitanian people on the border of Narbonese Gaul, occupying the N.W. slopes of the Cevennes.

<sup>2</sup> Such local tales of wonderful things to be seen in water are common enough. An unfounded view, perhaps suggested by Savaron's note, that *puteus* here means "hill" (Fr. *puy*, which, however, comes from *podium*), has found general acceptance. S. Reinach, *Rev. Arch. Sér. V. I. 3* (1916), suggests *orbem* for *urbem* and boldly takes *sublimem orbem* to mean the moon, which is proverbially invisible in French wells.

<sup>3</sup> i.e. the Castor and Pollux of his day.

<sup>4</sup> *Epist.* V. 21 is written to Iustinus and his brother Sacerdos.

<sup>5</sup> Conjectured without very much reason to be mod. Trèves (Dép. Gard).

## XXIV. L'ENVOI

the yellow Triober.<sup>1</sup> Next you shall see the land of the Gabales, where the snow lies deep, and, according to what the natives would have us believe, you will view a towering city in a well.<sup>2</sup> Next you shall hasten to those two Spartans of my time,<sup>3</sup> Iustus and his brother,<sup>4</sup> whose love is the theme of every tongue in the world, thrusting into nothingness Pirithous and Theseus and the faithful comrade of mad Orestes. After they have received you with open arms you shall go to Trevidos<sup>5</sup> and to the hill which is, alas! only too near to those slanderers, the Ruteni.<sup>6</sup> Here you will find the father of the learned Tonantius,<sup>7</sup> the governor and pillar of the Gallic lands, Ferreolus, peer of old Syagrius,<sup>8</sup> to whom Papianilla gives all the help a good wife can, sharing his cares—a woman surpassing Tanaquil and the daughter of Tricipitinus<sup>9</sup> and that votary of

<sup>1</sup> Their town (orig. Segodunum) is the modern Rodez on the upper course of the Aveyron, tributary of the Garonne. The name survives also in the district-name Le Rouerge.

<sup>2</sup> To the young Tonantius *Epist.* IX. 13 is addressed. His father, Tonantius Ferreolus, was related through his wife Papianilla (v. 37) to Sidonius, whose wife had the same name. He was a very eminent man of distinguished ancestry (*Epist.* VII. 12. 1 sqq.); Praetorian Prefect of Gaul 451, when he helped to secure Gothic support against Attila (*Epist.* VII. 12. 3); a little later his diplomacy saved Arles from Thorismund (*ib.*). In A.D. 469 he was sent to Rome with Thaumastus and Petronius to prosecute Arvandus (*Epist.* I. 7. 4). He became a Patrician (the date is uncertain). Besides his estate at Trevidos he had one called Prusianum near Nîmes (*Epist.* II. 9. 7).

<sup>3</sup> Afranius Syagrius of Lyons, maternal grandfather of Tonantius Ferreolus. To him Symmachus wrote a number of letters and Ausonius dedicated a book of poems. He was consul in A.D. 381 (less probably 382). See *Epist.* I. 7. 4, V. 17. 4.

<sup>4</sup> Lucretia, daughter of Sp. Lucretius Tricipitinus.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

qualis nec Phrygiae dicata Vestae  
 quae contra satis Albulam tumentem  
 duxit virgineo ratem capillo.  
 hinc te Laesora, Caucason Scytharum  
 vincens, aspiciet citusque Tarnis, 45  
 limosum et solido sapore pressum  
 piscem perspicua gerens in unda.  
 hic Zeti et Calais tibi adde pennas  
 nimbosumque iugum fugax caveto;  
 namque est assiduae ferax procellae; 50  
 sed quamvis rapido ferare cursu,  
 lassum te Vorocingus obtinebit.  
 nostrum hic invenies Apollinarem,  
 seu contra rabidi Leonis aestus  
 vestit frigore marmorum penates, 55  
 sive hortis spatiat in repostis,  
 quales mellifera virent in Hybla,  
 quales Corycium senem beantes  
 fuscabat picei latex Galaesi;  
 sive inter violas, thymum, ligustrum, 60  
 serpyllum, casiam, crocum atque caltam,  
 narcissos hyacinthinosque flores  
 spernit quam pretii petitor ampli  
 glaebam turifer advehit Sabaeus;  
 seu ficto potius specu quiescit 65  
 collis margine, qua nemus reflexum  
 nativam dare porticum laborans  
 non lucum arboribus facit, sed antrum.

52. vorocingus *C*, voracingus *PT*, veracingus *F*.

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<sup>1</sup> Claudia, the Vestal, drew along the Tiber the boat containing the image of Magna Mater from Pessinus. The idea that she dragged it by her hair is probably taken from Claudian, *Carm. Min.* XXX. (XXIX.) 18.

## XXIV. L'ENVOI

Phrygian Vesta<sup>1</sup> who against the fiercely swelling waters of Tiber dragged the ship by her virtuous hair. Next Laesora,<sup>2</sup> which overtops the Scythian Caucasus, shall behold you; so shall the rapid Tarnis,<sup>3</sup> which carries in its translucent waters a fish that haunts the mud, loaded with solid savouriness. Here put on the wings of Zetus and Calais and take flight from that cloudy mountain-ridge, for it is rife with constant gales. But however speedily you are rushing along, Vorocingus<sup>4</sup> shall harbour your wearied frame. Here you will find my dear Apollinaris. He may be clothing his home in a cold wrapping of marble against the heat of the raging Lion; or he may be walking in his secluded gardens, which are like those that bloom on honey-bearing Hybla or those others, the joy of the old man of Corycus, which the waters of black Galaesus darkened;<sup>5</sup> or there among his violets, thyme, privet, serpyllum, casia, saffron, marigolds, narcissus, and blooms of hyacinth he may be rejecting the earthy lump that the Sabaeen carrier of frankincense brings from afar, seeking a great price; or he may have chosen to rest in his mimic grotto on the edge of the hill, where the trees take a backward sweep, striving to make a natural portico, and thereby create not a

<sup>2</sup> A mountain, modern Lozère.

<sup>3</sup> Modern Tarn.

<sup>4</sup> Vorocingus, the estate of Apollinaris, was near the Prusianum of Tonantius Ferreolus (v. 34 n.): see *Epist.* II. 9. 1 and 7. The view that this Apollinaris is identical with the one mentioned in the n. on v. 85 (see Stevens, pp. 195 f.) raises grave difficulties.

<sup>5</sup> An allusion to Virgil's charming description of the garden cultivated near Tarentum by a humble Corycian, *Georg.* IV. 125 sqq. V. 59 is a paraphrase of Virgil, v. 126; *Corycium senem* is taken from the same sentence (v. 127).

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

quis pomaria prisca regis Indi hic nunc comparet aureasque vites electro viridante pampinatas, cum Porus posuit crepante gaza fulvo ex palmite vineam metalli gemmarum fluitantibus racemis?	70
• Hinc tu Cottion ibis atque Avito nostro dicis "ave," dehinc "valetō." debes obsequium viro perenne; nam, dent hinc veniam mei propinqui, non nobis prior est parens amico. hinc te iam Fidulus, decus bonorum et nec Tetradio latens secundus morum dotibus aut tenore recti, sancta suscipit hospitalitate. exin tende gradum Tribusque Villis Thaumastum expete, quemlibet duorum:	75
quorum iunior est mihi sodalis et collega simul graduque frater; quod si fors senior tibi invenitur, hunc pronus prope patrum saluta. hinc ad consulis ampla tecta Magni	80
	85
	90

81. latens ego : satis. *Vid. Class. Quart., loc. cit. p. 23.*

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<sup>1</sup> There are many ancient and mediæval references to "golden vines" and similar extravagances of the East. These became a favourite ingredient of the "Alexander-romance." For an interesting description of such wonders in the palace of King Porus see *Epist. Alexandri ad Aristotelem*, edited, with Iulius Valerius, by B. Kuebler, p. 193; Pfister's *Kleine Texte zum Alexanderroman*, p. 22. For the "golden vine" at Jerusalem see Josephus *B. Iud.* V. 5. 4, Tac. *Hist.* V. 5 *ad fin.*, Flor. I. 40 (III. 5) 30. The earliest mention of such a thing seems to be in Herodotus VII. 27.

<sup>2</sup> Cottion cannot be identified.

<sup>3</sup> A kinsman of Sidonius; *Epist.* III. 1 is addressed to him.



## XXIV. L'ENVOI

grove but rather a cavern. In that place who would now bring into comparison the ancient orchards of the Indian king and the golden vines<sup>1</sup> with their tendrils of verdant electrum in the days when Porus made a metal vineyard with treasure rustling on the yellow branches and clusters of gems swaying about?

Thence you shall go to Cottion<sup>2</sup> and say to my Avitus<sup>3</sup> "Good-day" and then "Good-bye." To that man you owe eternal duty, for (may my near and dear ones forgive me for this!) I put not even a parent before a friend. Next Fidulus,<sup>4</sup> glory of all good men and no humble second even to Tetradius<sup>5</sup> in gifts of character or in steadfast rectitude, shall receive you with pious hospitality. Thence wend your way and at Three Manors<sup>6</sup> visit Thaumastus—either of the two Wonders:<sup>7</sup> the younger is my bosom-friend and also my colleague and in standing my brother; but if you chance to find the elder, bow low and salute him as almost my uncle. Hence pass on to the spacious abode of the consul Magnus<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Not otherwise known.

<sup>5</sup> A lawyer, to whom *Epist.* III. 10 is written. There is a play on the words *Tetradius* (which suggests "four") and *secundus*.

<sup>6</sup> Not otherwise known.

<sup>7</sup> This seems to refer to Thaumastus and his younger brother Apollinaris; Sidonius is punning on the word *Thaumastus*, which means "wonderful." Thaum. is mentioned in *Epist.* I. 7. 4, V. 6. 1, and *Epist.* V. 7 is addressed to him. Apollinaris is mentioned in *Epist.* V. 6. 1; *Epist.* IV. 6, V. 3 and 6 are written to him. These brothers were kinsmen (probably cousins) of Sidonius. Simplicius seems to have been another brother; *Epist.* IV. 4 and 12 are addressed to him and Apollinaris; cf. VII. 4. 4. In V. 6. 1 Sidonius writes of Thaumastus in terms which remind one of the present passage.

<sup>8</sup> See 23. 455 n.

## THE POEMS OF SIDONIUS

Felicemque tuum veni, libelle;  
 et te bybliothecca qua paterna est.  
 qualis nec tetrici fuit Philagri,  
 admitti faciet Probus probatum;  
 hic saepe Eulaliae meae legeris, 95  
 cuius Cecropiae pares Minervae  
 mores et rigidi senes et ipse  
 quondam purpureus socer timebant.

Sed iam sufficit: ecce linque portum;  
 ne te pondere plus premam saburrae, 100  
 his in versibus ancoram levato.

92. qua *Luetjohann*: quae *codd.*

## XXIV. L'ENVOI

and to your friend Felix,<sup>1</sup> O book of mine, and where their father's library stands, a library such as not even the austere Philagrius<sup>2</sup> had, Probus,<sup>3</sup> having given you approbation, will cause you to be admitted. Here you will often be read by my kinswoman Eulalia,<sup>4</sup> of whose character, worthy of Athenian Minerva. strict greybeards and even her husband's father<sup>5</sup> in the days when he wore the purple used to stand in awe.

But enough! Away with you, put out from the harbour, and, lest I weight you further with a load of sandy ballast, up with the anchor even while these verses sound!

<sup>1</sup> See 9. 1 n.

<sup>2</sup> See n. on 7. 156.

<sup>3</sup> See 9. 6 and 333; *Epist.* IV. 1 is written to him.

<sup>4</sup> Wife of Probus and cousin of Sidonius.

<sup>5</sup> Magnus. The "purple" is that of the consulship.



LETTERS OF GAIUS SOLLIUS  
APOLLINARIS SIDONIUS

# GAI SOLLII APOLLINARIS SIDONII EPISTVLARVM

## LIBER PRIMVS

### I

#### SIDONIVS CONSTANTIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Diu praecipis, domine maior, summa suadendi auctoritate, sicuti es in his quae deliberabuntur consiliosissimus, ut, si quae mihi<sup>1</sup> litterae paulo politiores varia occasione fluxerint, prout eas causa persona tempus elicit, omnes retractatis exemplaribus enucleatisque uno volumine includam, Quinti Symmachi rotunditatem, Gai Plinii disciplinam maturitatemque vestigiis praesumptuosius insecu-

<sup>1</sup> mihi *add. R.*

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\* This letter was written about A.D. 469. Constantius of Lyons was a priest much admired by Sidonius for his character (see esp. III. 2) and for his literary ability (see II. 10. 3). He seems to be the Constantius who wrote a life of Remigius of Auxerre, but the extant life of Remigius attributed to him (*A. SS. Iul. VII.*, 200-220) is probably by a later writer.

<sup>1</sup> The respectful address *domine maior* seems to occur only in Sidonius (cf. I. 11. 17, II. 3. 1, III. 6. 3, IV. 3. 1, IV. 17. 1, VIII. 4. 1). M. B. O'Brien (*Titles of address in Christian Latin epistolography*, Washington, D.C., 1930) wrongly attributes the use also to Claudianus Mamertus,

# LETTERS OF GAIUS SOLLIUS APOLLINARIS SIDONIUS

## BOOK I

### I

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND CONSTANTIUS, GREETING \*

1. My honoured Lord,<sup>1</sup> you have this long while been pressing me (and you have every claim on my attention, for you are a most competent adviser on the matters about to be discussed) to collect all the letters making any little claim to taste that have flowed from my pen on different occasions as this or that affair, person, or situation called them forth, and to revise and correct the originals and combine all in a single book.<sup>2</sup> In so doing, I should be following, though with presumptuous steps, the path traced by Quintus Symmachus with his rounded style and by Gaius Plinius with his highly-developed

misled by the fact that Sidonius *Epist.* IV. 3 is reproduced in editions of Claudianus, to whom the letter was addressed. The use of comparative adjectives (especially *maior*, *prior*, *senior*) in titles is derived from the use of the comparative for the superlative, which arose early in colloquial Latin and ultimately became fairly common in the literature. For the use of *dominus* as an honorary title in letters see the article in *Thesaurus linguae Latinae*, especially 1925 f., 1929. 30-1930. 66; also O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup> For the meaning of *volumen* here see *Intro.*, p. lxi, n. 1.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

turus. 2. nam de Marco Tullio silere melius puto, quem in stilo epistulari nec<sup>1</sup> Iulius Titianus sub nominibus inlustrium feminarum digna similitudine expressit; propter quod illum ceteri quique Frontonianorum utpote consecraneum aemulati, cur veteranosum dicendi genus imitaretur, oratorum simiam nuncupaverunt. quibus omnibus ego immane dictu est quantum semper iudicio meo cesserim quantumque servandam singulis pronuntiaverim temporum suorum meritorumque praerogativam. 3. sed scilicet tibi parui tuaeque examinationi has non recensendas (hoc enim parum est) sed defaecandas, ut aiunt, limandasque commisi, sciens te inmodicum esse fautorem non studiorum modo verum etiam studiosorum. quam ob rem nos nunc perquam haesitabundos in hoc deinceps famae pelagus impellis. 4. porro autem super huiusmodi opusculo tutius conticueramus, contenti versuum felicius quam peritius editorum opinione, de qua mihi iam pridem in portu iudicii publici post lividorum latratuum Scyllas enavigatas sufficientis gloriae ancora sedet. sed si et hisce deliramentis

<sup>1</sup> silere . . . nec. Sic Wilamowitz; me pro melius et ordinem turbatum exhibent codd.

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<sup>1</sup> There were two writers of this name, father and son. The reference here is evidently to the elder, who seems to have fully earned and often received the nickname "ape"; see *Vit. Maximin.* 27. 5: *dictus est simia temporis sui, quod cuncta esset imitatus.*

<sup>2</sup> *Aemulari* often means "be jealous of," sometimes, as here, "be hostile to" or "disparage": Fronto's disciples



## BOOK I. I. TO CONSTANTIUS

artistry. 2. Marcus Tullius, indeed, I think I had better not mention, for even Julius Titianus<sup>1</sup> in his fictitious letters of famous women failed to produce a satisfactory copy of that writer's epistolary style, and for his pains was called "ape of the orators" by all the other disciples of Fronto, who were, as might be expected, spiteful toward this member of their own school for copying an outworn mode of writing.<sup>2</sup> Now in the first place I have always, in my own judgment, fallen terribly short of all the authors I have named; and secondly, I have always strenuously proclaimed that we must uphold the well-earned right of each of them to the foremost place in his own age. 3. But you see I have obeyed your command, and now submit to your scrutiny these epistles of mine, not merely for revision (which would not suffice) but also for purging, as the saying is, and polishing; for I know you are an enthusiastic friend not only to literary pursuits but to men of letters as well; and that is why, whilst I shiver on the brink, you are launching me upon this new sea of ambition. 4. It would have been safer, though, for me never to have said a word about a petty work of this sort, and to have been content with the reputation I won by my published verses, which have obtained a success out of proportion to their skill; thus I have sailed past Scyllas with their envious barkings, I have reached the harbour of public approval, and I have long been safely anchored to a sufficiency of fame. However, if Jealousy refrains

would have run down a man who aped Cicero's style, but they would scarcely have been jealous of him. *Oratorum* (if the reading is correct) probably means "Cicero and all his tribe."

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

genuinum molarem invidia non fixerit, actutum tibi a nobis volumina numerosiora percopiosis scaturientia sermocinationibus multiplicabuntur. vale.

### II

#### SIDONIUS AGRICOLAE SVO SALVTEM

1. Saepenumero postulavisti ut, quia Theudorici regis Gothorum commendat populis fama civilitatem, litteris tibi formae suae quantitas, vitae qualitas significaretur. pareo libens, in quantum epistularis pagina sinit, laudans in te tam delicatae sollicitudinis ingenuitatem. igitur vir est et illis dignus agnosci qui eum minus familiariter intuentur: ita personam suam deus arbiter et ratio naturae consummatae felicitatis dote sociata cumulaverunt; mores autem huiuscemodi, ut laudibus eorum nihil ne regni quidem defrudet invidia. 2. si forma quaeratur: corpore exacto, longissimis brevior, procerior eminentiorque mediocribus. capitis apex rotundus, in quo paululum a planitie frontis in verticem caesaries refuga crispatur. cervix non sedet enervis sed stat nervis.<sup>1</sup> geminos orbes hispidus superciliorum

<sup>1</sup> enervis sed stat *add. ego; codd. varie turbati.*

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\* It is generally agreed that this Agricola was a son of the Emperor Avitus (and therefore a brother-in-law of Sidonius). See II. 12. 1 sq. He rose to high office, perhaps to the Praetorian Prefecture of the Gauls. Eventually he entered the priesthood. We cannot with certainty date this letter early in the reign of Theodoric, as many do. The last sentence of § 9 seems to imply that Sidonius was at the Gothic court when he wrote it; in that case it would have been quite

## BOOK I. II. TO AGRICOLA

from fastening a jaw-tooth on these new absurdities as well, there will straightway pour in upon you roll after roll gushing with exuberant garrulity. Farewell.

### II

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS DEAR AGRICOLA, GREETING \*

1. Seeing that report commends to the world the graciousness of Theodoric,<sup>1</sup> King of the Goths, you have often asked me to describe to you in writing the dimensions of his person and the character of his life. I am delighted to do so, subject to the limits of a letter, and I appreciate the honest spirit which prompts so nice a curiosity. Well, he is a man who deserves to be studied even by those who are not in close relations with him. In his build the will of God and Nature's plan have joined together to endow him with a supreme perfection; and his character is such that even the jealousy which hedges a sovereign has no power to rob it of its glories. 2. Take first his appearance. His figure is well-proportioned, he is shorter than the very tall, taller and more commanding than the average man. The top of his head is round, and on it his curled hair retreats gently from his even forehead. His neck is not squat and sinewless but erect and sinewy. Each eye is encircled by a shaggy arch of natural for Agricola to ask him for a description of Theodoric and his ways. Even though Agricola, as the son of Avitus, must have heard a good deal about the Gothic king, he would be interested in reading an up-to-date record of Sidonius's impressions.

<sup>1</sup> Theodoric II. (reigned A.D. 453-466).

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

coronat arcus; si vero cilia flectantur, ad malas medias palpebrarum margo prope pervenit. aurium legulae, sicut mos gentis est, crinium superiacentium flagellis operiuntur. nasus venustissime incurvus. labra subtilia nec dilatatis oris angulis ampliata. pilis infra narium antra fruticantibus cotidiana succisio. barba concavis hirta temporibus, quam in subdita vultus parte surgentem stirpitus tonsor assiduus genis ut adhuc vesticipibus evellit. 3. menti, gutturi, colli, non obesi sed succulenti, lactea cutis, quae propius inspecta iuvenali rubore suffunditur; namque hunc illi crebro colorem non ira sed verecundia facit. teretes umeri, validi lacerti, dura brachia, patulae manus, recedente alvo pectus excedens.<sup>1</sup> aream dorsi humilior inter excrementa costarum spina discriminat. tuberosum est utrumque musculis prominentibus latus. in succinctis regnat vigor ilibus. corneum femur, internodia poplitum bene mascula, maximus in minime rugosis genibus honor; crura suris fulta turgentibus et, qui magna sustentat membra, pes modicus. 4. si actionem diurnam, quae est forinsecus exposita, perquiras: antelucanos sacerdotum suorum coetus minimo comitatu expetit, grandi sedulitate veneratur; quamquam, si sermo

<sup>1</sup> excedens *Luettjohann*: accedens.

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. he does not let his moustache grow.

## BOOK I. II. TO AGRICOLA

brow; when his eyelids droop, the extremities of the lashes reach almost half-way down the cheeks. The tips of his ears, according to national fashion, are hidden by wisps of hair that are trained over them. His nose is most gracefully curved; his lips are delicately moulded and are not enlarged by any extension of the corners of the mouth. Every day there is a clipping of the bristles that sprout beneath the nostril-cavities.<sup>1</sup> The hair on his face grows heavily in the hollows of the temples, but as it springs up upon the lowest part of the face the barber constantly roots it out from the cheeks, keeping them as though they were still in the earliest stage of manly growth. 3. His chin, throat and neck suggest not fat but fullness; the skin is milk-white, but if closely looked at it takes on a youthful blush, for this tint is frequently produced in his case by modesty, not by ill-temper. His shoulders are well-shaped, his upper arms sturdy, his forearms hard, his hands broad. The chest is prominent, the stomach recedes; the surface of his back is divided by a spine that lies low between the bulging ribs; his sides swell with protuberant muscles. Strength reigns in his well-girt loins. His thigh is hard as horn; the upper legs from joint to joint are full of manly vigour; his knees are completely free from wrinkles and full of grace; the legs have the support of sturdy calves, but the feet which bear the weight of such mighty limbs are of no great size. 4. And now you may want to know all about his everyday life, which is open to the public gaze. Before dawn he goes with a very small retinue to the service conducted by the priests of his faith, and he worships with great earnestness,

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

secretus, possis animo advertere quod servet istam pro consuetudine potius quam pro ratione reverentiam. reliquum mane regni administrandi cura sibi deputat. circumssistit sellam comes armiger; pellitorum turba satellitum ne absit, admittitur, ne obstrepat, eliminatur, sicque pro foribus immurmurat exclusa velis, inclusa cancellis. inter haec intromissis gentium legationibus audit plurima, pauca respondet; si quid tractabitur, differt; si quid expeditur, accelerat. hora est secunda: surgit e solio aut thesauris inspiciendis vacaturus aut stabulis. 5. si venatione nuntiata procedit, arcum lateri innectere citra gravitatem regiam iudicat; quem tamen, si comminus avem feramque aut venanti aut vianti fors obtulerit, manui post tergum reflexae puer inserit nervo lorove fluitantibus; quem sicut puerile computat gestare thecatum, ita muliebre accipere iam tensem. igitur acceptum modo sinuatis<sup>1</sup> e regione capitibus intendit, modo ad talum pendulum nodi parte conversa languentem chordae laqueum vagantis digito superlabente prosequitur; et mox spicula capit implet expellit; quidve cupias percuti prior admonet ut eligas<sup>2</sup>; eligis quid feriat:

<sup>1</sup> sinuatis *FR*: insinuatis.

<sup>2</sup> ut eligas *add. ego*.

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<sup>1</sup> Or possibly "if one talks to him in private."

<sup>2</sup> One end of the string is permanently knotted to one "horn" of the bow, the other end has a loop, which can be easily slipped on to the other horn. Theodoric raises one foot, keeping the heel on the ground, and rests the strung end of the bow on that foot, while the other end rests against his body or is firmly held in one hand. He then stoops, bending the bow at the same time. Taking hold of the string at the end where it is tied to the bow, he runs his fingers along it, thus

## BOOK I. II. TO AGRICOLA

though (between ourselves<sup>1</sup>) one can see that this devotion is a matter of routine rather than of conviction. The administrative duties of his sovereignty claim the rest of the morning. Nobles in armour have places near his throne; a crowd of guards in their dress of skins is allowed in so as to be at hand, but excluded from the presence so as not to disturb; and so they keep up a hum of conversation by the door, outside the curtains but within the barriers. Meanwhile deputations from various peoples are introduced, and he listens to a great deal of talk, but replies shortly, postponing business which he intends to consider, speeding that which is to be promptly settled. The second hour comes: he rises from his throne, to pass an interval in inspecting his treasures or his stables. 5. When a hunt has been proclaimed and he sallies forth, he considers it beneath his royal dignity to have his bow slung at his side; but if in the chase or on the road chance presents bird or beast within his range, he puts his hand behind his back, and an attendant places the bow in it, with the string or thong hanging loose; for he thinks it childish to carry the bow in a case, and womanish to take it over ready strung. When he takes it he either holds it straight in front of him and bends the two ends and so strings it, or he rests upon his raised foot the end which has the knot, and runs his finger along the loose string until he comes to the dangling loop;<sup>2</sup> then he takes up the arrows, sets them in place, and lets them fly. Or he may urge you first to choose what quarry you wish to be struck down: you choose what he is to straightening it out, until they reach the loop, which he duly attaches.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

quod elegeris ferit; et, si ab alterutro errandum est, rarius fallitur figentis ictus quam destinantis obtutus. 6. si in convivium venit, quod quidem diebus profestis simile privato est, non ibi impolitam congeriem viventis argenti mensis cedentibus suspiriosus minister imponit; maximum tunc pondus in verbis est, quippe cum illic aut nulla narrentur aut seria. toreumatum peripetasmatumque modo conchyliata profertur supellex, modo byssina. cibi arte, non pretio placent, fercula nitore, non pondere. scyphorum paterarumque raras oblationes facilius est ut accuset sitis quam recuset ebrietas. quid multis? videas ibi elegantiam Graecam abundantiam Gallicanam celeritatem Italam, publicam pompam privatam diligentiam regiam disciplinam. de luxu autem illo sabbatario narrationi meae supersedendum est, qui nec latentes potest latere personas. 7. ad coepta redeatur. dapibus expleto somnus meridianus saepe nullus, semper exiguus. quibus horis viro

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<sup>1</sup> *Toreuma* should mean a piece of ornamental metal-work, e.g. a chased vase or cup; but Sirmond is undoubtedly right in thinking that Sidonius connected the word with *torus*, as did Prudentius (*Psychom.* 370) and Salvian (*Ad Eccl.* IV. 33). For other examples in Sidonius see II. 13. 6, IX. 13. 5 v. 14. Sirmond takes it to mean the coverings of the couch, but this does not suit the epithet *sericatum*, "covered with silk," in Bk. II., and the expression *rutilum toreuma bysso* in Bk. IX., *loc. cit.*, does not favour, though it does not absolutely exclude, such an interpretation. All difficulty disappears if we suppose that the word was regarded as an ornate substitute for *torus*, "couch," or, more strictly, the mattress of the couch, over which a covering (*peristroma*) was placed. *Peripetasma* is applied to a spreading drapery, whether a hanging or a covering. Here the reference is probably to the *peristromata*, which often hung down far over the side of the couch, and



## BOOK I. II. TO AGRICOLA

strike, and he strikes what you have chosen. Should a mistake be made by either, it is more often the eyesight of the selector than the aim of the bowman that is at fault. 6. When one joins him at dinner (which on all but festival days is just like that of a private household), there is no unpolished conglomeration of discoloured old silver set by panting attendants on sagging tables; the weightiest thing on these occasions is the conversation, for there are either no stories or only serious ones. The couches, with their spreading draperies, show an array sometimes of scarlet cloth, sometimes of fine linen.<sup>1</sup> The viands attract by their skilful cookery, not by their costliness, the platters by their brightness, not by their weight. Replenishment of the goblets or wine-bowls comes at such long intervals that there is more reason for the thirsty to complain than for the intoxicated to refrain. To sum up: you can find there Greek elegance, Gallic plenty, Italian briskness; the dignity of state, the attentiveness of a private home, the ordered discipline of royalty. But as to the luxury of the days of festival I had better hold my tongue, for even persons of no note cannot fail to note it. 7. To resume the story: after satisfying his appetite he never takes more than a short midday sleep, and often goes without it. In the hours when the gaming-board<sup>2</sup>

*torcumatum peripetasmatumque* may be regarded as a hendiadys.

<sup>2</sup> *Tabula* may here be used for *tabula lusoria* or as the name of a particular board-game, on which see R. G. Austin in *Greece and Rome* IV. (1935), pp. 77-79. In any case the game described in this passage is one of those in which both dice and pieces were used, as in the various forms of backgammon.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

tabula cordi, tesseræ colligit rapide, inspicit sollicite, volvit argute, mittit instantèr, ioculanter compellat, patienter expectat. in bonis iactibus tacet, in malis ridet, in neutris irascitur, in utrisque philosophatur. secundas fastidit vel timere vel facere, quarum opportunitates spernit oblatas, transit oppositas. sine motu evaditur, sine colludio evadit. putes illum et in calculis arma tractare: sola est illi cura vincendi. 8. cum ludendum est, regiam sequestrat tantisper severitatem, hortatur ad ludum libertatem communionemque. dicam quod sentio: timet timeri. denique oblectatur commotione superati et tum demum credit sibi non cecidisse collegam, cum fidem fecerit victoriae suae bilis aliena. quodque mirere, saepe illa laetitia minimis occasionibus veniens ingentium negotiorum merita fortunat. tunc petitionibus diu ante per patrociniorum naufragia iactatis absolutionis subitae portus aperitur; tunc etiam ego aliquid obsecraturus feliciter vincor, quando mihi ad hoc tabula perit, ut causa salvetur. 9. circa nonam recrudescit molis illa regnandi. redeunt pulsantes, redeunt

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<sup>1</sup> We do not know enough about the game to understand this. *Secundae* (sc. *tesseræ*?) is obviously a technical term. Probably at certain junctures the player was allowed the option of a second throw. The translation given of *oppositas* accords with Dr. Semples' view.

<sup>2</sup> *Tabula* may here be the name of the game, but more probably it is a collective term for a player's pieces, as

## BOOK I. II. TO AGRICOLA

attracts him he is quick to pick up the dice; he examines them anxiously, spins them with finesse, throws them eagerly; he addresses them jestingly and calmly awaits the result. If the throw is lucky, he says nothing; if unlucky, he smiles; in neither case does he lose his temper, in either case he is a real philosopher. As for a second throw, he is too proud either to fear it or to make it; when a chance of one is presented he disdains it, when it is used against him he ignores it.<sup>1</sup> He sees his opponent's piece escape without stirring, and gets his own free without being played up to. You would actually think he was handling weapons when he handles the pieces on the board; his sole thought is of victory. 8. When it is the time for play he throws off for a while the stern mood of royalty and encourages fun and freedom and good-fellowship. My own opinion is that he dreads being feared. Further, he is delighted at seeing his defeated rival disgruntled, and it is only his opponent's ill-temper which really satisfies him that the game has not been given him. Now comes something to surprise you; the exultation which comes upon him on these trivial occasions often speeds the claims of important transactions. At such times the haven of a prompt decision is thrown open to petitions which have for a long time previously been in distress through the foundering of their advocates. I myself at such times, if I have a favour to ask, find it fortunate to be beaten by him, for I lose my pieces<sup>2</sup> to win my cause. 9. About the ninth hour the burden of royal business is taken up afresh. Back come the im-

*perire* was a technical term in such games for "to be taken."

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

summoventes; ubique litigiosus fremit ambitus, qui tractus in vesperam cena regia interpellante rarescit et per aulicos deinceps pro patronorum varietate dispergitur, usque ad tempus concubiae noctis excubaturus. sane intromittuntur, quamquam raro, inter cenandum mimici sales, ita ut nullus conviva mordacis linguae felle feriat; sic tamen quod illic nec organa hydraulica sonant nec sub phonasco vocalium concentus meditatam acroama simul intonat; nullus ibi lyristes choraules mesochorus tympanistria psaltria canit, rege solum illis fidibus delenito, quibus non minus mulcet virtus animum quam cantus auditum. 10. cum surrexerit, inchoat nocturnas aulica gaza custodias; armati regiae domus aditibus assistunt, quibus horae primi soporis vigilabuntur. sed iam quid meas istud ad partes, qui tibi indicanda non multa de regno sed pauca de rege promisi? simul et stilo finem fieri decet, quia et tu cognoscere viri non amplius quam studia personamque voluisti et ego non historiam sed epistolam efficere curavi. vale.

## BOOK I. II. TO AGRICOLA

fortunate petitioners, back come the marshals' to drive them off; everywhere the rivalry of the disputants makes an uproar. This continues till evening; then the royal supper interrupts and the bustle fades away, distributing itself among the various courtiers whose patronage this or that party enjoys; and thus they keep watch till the night-watches. It is true that occasionally (not often) the banter of low comedians is admitted during supper, though they are not allowed to assail any guest with the gall of a biting tongue. In any case no hydraulic organs are heard there, nor does any concert-party under its trainer boom forth a set performance in chorus; there is no music of lyrist, flautist or dance-conductor, tambourine-girl or female citharist; for the king finds a charm only in the string music which comforts the soul with virtue just as much as it soothes the ear with melody. 10. When he rises from the table, the night-watch is first posted at the royal treasury and armed sentries are set at the entrances to the palace, who will keep guard through the hours of the first sleep.

But I have already exceeded my part, for I promised to tell you a little about the king, not a long story about his rule; it is also fitting that my pen should come to a stop because you desired to hear only of the tastes and personality of the great man and because I took it upon myself to write a letter, not a history. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

## III

### SIDONIUS PHILOMATHIO SVO SALVTEM

1. I nunc et legibus me ambitus interrogatum sonatu move, cur adipiscendae dignitati hereditariae curis pervigilibus incumbam; cui pater socer avus proavus praefecturis urbanis praetorianisque, magisteriis Palatinis militaribusque micuerunt. 2. et ecce Gaudentius meus, hactenus tantum tribunicius, oscitantem nostrorum civium desidiam vicariano apice transcendit. mussitat quidem iuvenum nostrorum calcata generositas, sed qui transiit derogantes in hoc solum movetur, ut gaudeat. igitur venerantur hucusque contemptum ac subitae stupentes dona

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\* Philomathius is mentioned in V. 17. 7. It is unfortunately impossible to date this letter, as we do not know when Gaudentius held the vicariate referred to.

<sup>1</sup> There is no other evidence that the great-grandfather of Sidonius held any such public office, or that any of the kinsmen referred to ever held the Prefecture of the City; Sidonius himself held it in A.D. 468. *Magisterium* was the office of a *magister*, and *mag. mil.* obviously refers to the *magisterium militum* held by Avitus (Introd., p. xx, *Carm.* 7. 377 sq., n. on 359 sqq.), but *Palatinis magisteriis* is puzzling. We do not read elsewhere that any relation of Sidonius was ever *magister officiorum* or one of the *magistri scriniorum* (on these offices see Bury, I. p. 29). It is just possible, though scarcely likely, that Sidonius's father held one of these posts after being *tribunus et notarius*, under Honorius, or, if he became chief (*primicerius*) of the *tribuni et notarii*, he may have received the honorary title of *magister officiorum* on his retirement from office, as seems sometimes to have happened. Or did the mysterious great-grandfather hold one of those offices? On the whole, it seems probable that when Sidonius says

## BOOK I. III. TO PHILOMATHIUS

### III

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND PHILOMATHIUS. GREETING \*

1. Go to now—indict me by the Electoral Corruption Acts and propose my dismissal from the Senate for striving with unsleeping labours to win a *hereditary* position, seeing that my father, my father-in-law, my grandfather and my great-grandfather won the distinctions of praetorian and city prefectures and Masterships at court and in the army.<sup>1</sup> 2. And lo! my friend Gaudentius, till now only of tribunician rank, has overclimbed the yawning idleness of our countrymen by winning the dignity of a *vicarius*.<sup>2</sup> Of course our young lordlings are muttering about “trampling on good birth,” but when a man has risen over the heads of backbiters the only effect on him is a feeling of elation. So they worship a man whom till yesterday they belittled, and, full of wonderment at the

“Palatine and military Masterships” he is speaking loosely and grandiloquently of a Mastership of soldiers and the “Palatine” post of *tribunus et notarius*. The name “Palatine” was applied to offices connected with the great departments of the Imperial civil service which had their headquarters at Rome under the immediate control of the Emperor.

<sup>2</sup> He had been *tribunus et notarius* (on this office see Bury I. 23, C.M.H. I. 38), and was now *Vicarius Septem Provinciarum per Gallias*. The provinces in each praetorian prefecture were grouped so as to form a number of dioceses (*dioceses*), each of which was administered by a *vicarius*. The *Septem Provinciae* were Viennensis, Narbonensis I and II, Novem Populi (Novempopulana), Aquitanica I and II, Alpes Maritimae; but the *Vicarius Septem Provinciarum* seems at this time to have exercised supervision over all the Gallic provinces.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

fortunae quem consessu despiciebant,<sup>1</sup> sede suspi-  
ciunt. ille obiter stertentum oblatratorum aures,  
rauci voce praeconis everberat, qui in eum licet  
stimulis inimicalibus excitentur, scamnis tamen  
amicalibus deputabuntur. 3. unde te etiam par  
fuerit privilegio consiliorum praefecturae, in quae  
participanda deposceris, antiquati honoris perniciousiter  
sarcire dispendium, ne, si extra praerogativam  
consilarii in concilium veneris, solas vicariorum vices  
egisse videre. vale.

### IV

#### SIDONIUS GAVDENTIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Maecte esto, vir amplissime, fascibus partis dote  
meritorum; quorum ut titulis apicibusque potiari  
non maternos redditus, non avitas largitiones, non  
uxorias gemmas, non paternas pecunias numeravisti,  
quia tibi e contrario apud principis domum inspecta  
sinceritas, spectata sedulitas, admissa sodalitas laudi  
fuere. o terque quaterque beatum te, de cuius

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<sup>1</sup> He had apparently been assessor to the Vicarius.

<sup>2</sup> The counsellors (*consilarii*), or assessors (*adsessores*), of the Praetorian Prefect had a position of great dignity. At the end of their year of office they received many privileges, and ranked with the Vicarii.



## BOOK I. IV. TO GAUDENTIUS

gifts of an unexpected fortune, they look up to him in the judgment-seat, though they used to look down on him when he was seated by their side. Meanwhile the lucky man makes the husky usher's yells beat upon the ears of those stertorous snarlers; but although they are goaded by feelings of enmity towards him they will be given places on the benches reserved for his friends. 3. So it will be the proper course for you also to repair promptly the loss of your expired office<sup>1</sup> by accepting the earnest invitation addressed to you to occupy the favoured position of Counsellor to the Prefect;<sup>2</sup> for if you come to the Council<sup>3</sup> without the special standing of a counsellor you will be looked upon only as one who has acted as deputy vicarius. Farewell.

### IV

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND GAUDENTIUS, GREETING

1. Congratulations, my noble friend, on the office you have won through the dower of your deserts. To win its titles and glories you have not expended a mother's rent-roll, a grandfather's bounty, a wife's jewels or a father's capital; but on the contrary you have won distinction in an emperor's household by well-tested honesty, well-attested assiduity and an approved claim to intimacy. "O three and four times happy thou"<sup>4</sup> by whose elevation joy is brought to your friends, punishment to your detractors and dis-

<sup>3</sup> The *Concilium Septem Provinciarum* (Introd., p. xii).

<sup>4</sup> Virg. *Aen.* I. 94.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

culmine datur amicis laetitia, lividis poëna, posteris gloria, tum praeterea vegetis et alacribus exemplum, desidibus et pigris incitamentum; et tamen, si qui sunt qui te quocumque animo deinceps aemulabuntur, sibi forsitan, si te consequantur, debeant tibi debebunt procul dubio quod sequuntur.

2. spectare mihi videor bonorum pace praefata illam in invidis ignaviam superbientem et illud militandi inertibus familiare fastidium, cum a desperatione crescendi inter bibendum philosophantes ferias inhonoratorum laudant, vitio desidiaë, non studio perfectionis . . .

\* \* \*

3. . . . appetitus, ne adhuc pueris usui foret, maiorum iudicio reiciebatur; sic adolescentum declamatiunculas pannis textilibus comparantes intellegebant eloquia iuvenum laboriosius brevia produci quam porrecta succidi. sed hinc quia istaec satis, quod subest, quaeso reminiscaris velle me tibi studiū huiusce vicissitudinem reponderare, modo me actionibus iustis deus annuens et sospitem praestet et reducem. vale.

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<sup>1</sup> The end of this letter and the beginning of another (of which § 3 is the conclusion) have apparently been lost.

## BOOK I. IV. TO GAUDENTIUS

tion to your posterity; an example, moreover, to the energetic and zealous and a spur to the idle and lazy. And certainly if others in their turn, no matter in what spirit, become your rivals, such people, though they may claim credit to themselves if they catch up with you, will certainly owe it to you that they follow in your path. 2. I picture myself looking on (I say this with all respect to the better sort) at the combination of arrogance and indolence among your ill-wishers, and at that disdain of public service which is characteristic of the slothful, when, hopeless themselves of rising in the world, they play the philosopher over their wine and praise the leisured lives of those who hold no office,—not from any eagerness for perfection but simply through vicious indolence.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

3. Indeed the judgment of our ancestors condemned the straining after . . . lest it should be taken advantage of by mere boys. They compared the short rhetorical exercises of striplings with pieces of cloth, meaning that it is harder to lengthen the compositions of young students if too short than to cut them down if too long. But I have said enough on this matter: now as to what lies at the bottom of my remarks—please remember that I am most anxious to repay this zeal of yours by giving like for like, provided only that God, who rewards righteous efforts, keeps me safe and brings me home. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

## V

### SIDONIUS HERONIO<sup>1</sup> SVO SALVTEM

1. Litteras tuas Romae positus accepi, quibus an secundum commune consilium sese peregrinationis meae coepta promoveant, sollicitus inquiris, viam etiam qualem qualiterque confecerim, quos aut fluvios viderim poetarum carminibus inlustres aut urbes moenium situ inclitas aut montes numinum opinione vulgatos aut campos proeliorum replicatione monstrabiles, quia voluptuosum censeas quae lectione compereris eorum qui inspexerint fideliores didicisse memoratu. quocirca gaudeo te quid agam cupere cognoscere; namque huiusmodi studium de adfectu interiore proficiscitur. ilicet, etsi secus quaequam, sub ope tamen dei ordiar a secundis, quibus primordiis maiores nostri etiam sinisteritatum suarum relationes evolvere auspicabantur.

2. egresso mihi Rhodanusiae nostrae moenibus publicus cursus usui fuit utpote sacris apicibus accito, et quidem per domicilia sodalium propinquorumque; ubi sane vianti moram non veredorum paucitas sed amicorum multitudo faciebat, quae mihi arto implicita complexu itum reditumque felicem certantibus votis

<sup>1</sup> herenio *LNT*.

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\* On the occasion of this letter and of No. 9 below see *Introd.*, p. xl. Nothing is known of Heronius beyond what may be gathered from these two letters.

<sup>1</sup> On the meaning of *ilicet* see n. on *Carm.* 2. 332.

<sup>2</sup> Lugdunum (Lyons), situated at the confluence of the Rhodanus (Rhône) and the Arar (Saône).

## BOOK I. v. TO HERONIUS

### V

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND HERONIUS, GREETING \*

1. I received your letter after I had settled down at Rome. I see that you inquire anxiously whether the objects of my journey are prospering according to our common plan. You ask also what the route was like and in what manner I travelled over it, what rivers I viewed made famous by the songs of poets, what cities renowned for their situation, what mountains celebrated as the reputed haunts of deities, what fields claiming the interest of the sight-seer by reason of their memories of battles; for having learnt of these things in books you think it would be a pleasure (so you tell me) to have a more faithful account from those who have seen them with their own eyes. I am delighted therefore that you long to learn how I fare, for interest of this kind proceeds from heartfelt affection. Well,<sup>1</sup> though some things went wrong, I will begin by God's help with my good news; for our ancestors too made it a rule to begin with such, as forming an auspicious start even for a narrative of their misfortunes. 2. When I passed the gates of our native Rhodanusia<sup>2</sup> I found the state-post at my disposal as one summoned by an imperial letter, and, moreover, the homes of intimate friends and relations lined the route; delays on my journey were due not to scarcity of post-horses but to multiplicity of friends, who clasped me to their hearts and vied with one another in their prayers on my behalf for a prosperous journey and

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

conprecabatur. sic Alpium iugis appropinquatum; quarum mihi citus et facilis ascensus et inter utrimque terrentis latera praerupti cavatis in callem nivibus itinera mollita. 3. fluviorum quoque, si qui non navigabiles, vada commoda, vel certe pervii pontes, quos antiquitas a fundamentis ad usque aggerem calcabili silice crustatum crypticis arcubus fornicavit. Ticini cursoriam (sic navigio nomen) escendi, qua in Eridanum brevi delatus cantatas saepe comissaliter nobis Phaethontidas et commenticias arborei metalli lacrimas risi. 4. ulvosum Lambrum caerulum Adduam, velocem Athesim pigrum Mincium, qui Ligusticis Euganeisque montibus oriebantur, paulum per ostia adversa subvectus in suis etiam gurgitibus inspexi; quorum ripae torique passim quernis acernisque nemoribus vestiebantur. hic avium resonans dulce concentus, quibus nunc in concavis harundinibus, nunc quoque in iuncis pungentibus, nunc et in scirpis enodibus nidorum struis imposita nutabat; quae cuncta virgulta tumultuatim super amnicos margines soli bibuli suco fota fruticaverant. 5. atque obiter Cremonam praevectus adveni, cuius est olim Tityro Mantuano largum suspirata proximitas. Brixillum dein oppidum, dum succedenti

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<sup>1</sup> Pavia.

<sup>2</sup> *Cursoria* (sc. *navis*), so called from being employed on the Imperial postal service (*cursus publicus*).

<sup>3</sup> The Po. On its banks, according to the legend, the sisters of Phaethon were turned into poplars and their tears into amber.

<sup>4</sup> The modern names of these rivers are Lambro, Adda, Adige, Mincio.

<sup>5</sup> Virg. *Ec.* IX. 28, *Mantua vae miseræ nimium vicina Cremonae*. The words are uttered by Moeris, not Tityrus, but Tityrus to Sidonius generally means the Virgil of the *Eclogues*: cf. *Carm.* 4. 1.

## BOOK I. v. TO HERONIUS

homecoming. In this way I drew near to the heights of the Alps. I found the ascent quick and easy; between walls of terrifying precipice on either side, travelling had been simplified by cutting a pathway through the snow. 3. As to the rivers, I found that such of them as were not navigable had convenient fords or at any rate bridges fit for traffic: these our forefathers have constructed on a series of vaulted arches reaching from the foundations up to the roadway with its cobbled surface. At Ticinum<sup>1</sup> I went on board a packet-boat<sup>2</sup> (so they call the vessel) and travelled quickly down-stream to the Eridanus,<sup>3</sup> where I had my laugh over Phaethon's sisters, of whom we have often sung amidst our revels, and over those mythical tears of arboreal ore. 4. I passed the sedgy Lambrus, the blue Addua, the swift Athesis, and the sluggish Mincius,<sup>4</sup> rivers which have their sources in the mountains of Liguria and the Euganeans. In each case I cruised a little way upstream from the point of confluence so as to view each actually in the midst of its own waters. Their banks and knolls were everywhere clad with groves of oak and maple. A concert of birds filled the air with sweet sounds; their nest-structures quivered, balanced sometimes on hollow reeds, sometimes on prickly rushes, sometimes too on smooth bulrushes: for all this undergrowth, nourished on the moisture of the spongy soil, had sprouted confusedly along the river banks. 5. Proceeding on my way I came to Cremona, whose nearness caused Mantua's Tityrus to sigh profoundly in days of old.<sup>5</sup> Next we entered the town of Brixillum<sup>6</sup> only to quit it, just allowing time

<sup>1</sup> Brescello, on the right bank of the Po.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

Aemiliano nautae decedit Venetus remex, tantum ut exiremus intravimus, Ravennam paulo post cursu dexteriore subeuntes; quo loci veterem civitatem novumque portum media via Caesaris ambigas utrum conectat an separet. insuper oppidum duplex pars interluit Padi, [certa]<sup>1</sup> pars alluit; qui ab alveo principali molium publicarum discerptus obiectu et per easdem derivatis tramitibus exhaustus sic dividua fluenta partitur ut praebeant moenibus circumfusa praesidium, infusa commercium. 6. hic cum peropportuna cuncta mercatui, tum praecipue quod esui competeret, deferebatur; nisi quod, cum sese hinc salsum portis pelagus impingeret, hinc cloacali pulte fossarum discursu linternum ventilata ipse lentati languidus lapsus umoris nauticis cuspidibus foraminato fundi glutino sordidaretur, in medio undarum sitiēbamus, quia nusquam vel aquae-ductuum liquor integer vel cisterna defaecabilis vel fons inriguus vel puteus inlimis. 7. unde progressis ad Rubiconem ventum, qui originem nomini de glarearum colore puniceo mutuabatur quique olim Gallis cisalpinis Italisque veteribus terminus erat, cum populis utrisque Hadriatici maris oppida divisui fuere. hinc Ariminum Fanumque perveni, illud

<sup>1</sup> certa *seclusi*; *ex gloss. cetera corruptela orta videtur.*

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<sup>1</sup> The harbour constructed by Augustus as a naval station was connected with the old town, which was three miles distant, by a causeway, here called "Caesar's road." A large suburb which grew up between the old town and the harbour-town (Portus Classis, or simply Classis) was called Caesarea.

<sup>2</sup> Great confusion has been imported into this sentence through taking *insuper* as a preposition. The "double town" is the old town, which is divided into two by the branch of the Po which runs through it.



## BOOK I. v. TO HERONIUS

for our oarsmen, who were Veneti, to give up their places to boatmen of Aemilia, and a little later we reached Ravenna, on a course bearing to the right. Here Caesar's road<sup>1</sup> runs between the old town and the new harbour; one could scarcely say whether it joins or parts them. Moreover, one branch of the Padus flows through this double town, another flows by it;<sup>2</sup> for the river is diverted from its main bed by the intervention of the city embankments, along whose course are various branch channels which draw off more and more of the stream. The effect of this division is that the waters which encircle the walls provide protection, while those which flow into the town bring commerce. 6. The whole situation is most favourable to trade, and in particular we saw large food-supplies coming in. But there was one drawback: on one side the briny sea-water rushed up to the gates, and elsewhere the sewer-like filth of the channels was churned up by the boat-traffic, and the bargemen's poles, boring into the glue at the bottom, helped to befoul the current, slow and sluggish at the best: the result was that we went thirsty though surrounded by water,<sup>3</sup> finding nowhere pure water from aqueducts, nowhere a filth-proof reservoir, nowhere a bubbling spring or mud-free well. 7. Leaving this place we travelled to the Rubicon; the name is derived from the red tint of its gravel. This used to be the dividing line between Cisalpine Gaul and the old Italy, the towns on the Adriatic coast being divided between the two peoples. From this point I came on to Ariminum and Fanum, the former place celebrated

<sup>3</sup> For this aspersion cf. I. 8. 2, and see note on *Carm.* 9. 298.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

Iuliana rebellione memorabile, hoc Hasdrubaliano funere infectum: siquidem illic Metaurus, cuius ita in longum felicitas uno die parta porrigitur, ac si etiam nunc Dalmatico salo cadavera sanguinolenta decoloratis gurgitibus inferret. 8. hinc cetera Flaminiae oppida statim ut ingrediebar egressus laevo Picentes, dextro Vmbros latere transmisi; ubi mihi seu Calaber Atabulus seu pestilens regio Tuscorum spiritu aeris venenatis flatibus inebriato et modo calores alternante, modo frigora vaporatum corpus infecit. interea febris sitisque penitissimum cordis medullarumque secretum depopulabantur; quarum aviditati non solum amoena fontium aut abstrusa puteorum, quamquam haec quoque, sed tota illa vel vicina vel obvia fluenta, id est vitrea Velini gelida Clitumni, Anienis caerulea Naris sulpurea, pura Fabaris turbida Tiberis, metu tamen desiderium fallente, pollicebamur. 9. inter haec patuit et Roma conspectui; cuius mihi non solum formas verum etiam naumachias videbar epotaturus. ubi priusquam vel pomoeria contingerem, triumphalibus apostolorum liminibus adfusus omnem protinus

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<sup>1</sup> After crossing the Rubicon, Caesar promptly occupied Ariminum (Rimini). Fanum Fortunae (Faenza) was an Umbrian coast-town, near the mouth of the Metaurus (Metauro). The exact site of Hasdrubal's defeat is unknown, but it was probably not many miles from the mouth of the river.

<sup>2</sup> A hot dry wind; see commentators on Horace, *Sat.* I. 5. 78.

<sup>3</sup> A lake in the Sabine country, near the Nar (Nera), now called Piè di Lago or Lago delle Marmore. Virgil mentions the *fontes Velini* (*Aen.* VII. 517).

<sup>4</sup> This name is borrowed from Virgil (*Aen.* VII. 715). Servius says it is the same as the Farfarus (modern Farfa), a Sabine stream which flows into the Tiber.

## BOOK I. v. TO HERONIUS

through the insurrection of Julius, the latter dyed with Hasdrubal's life-blood;<sup>1</sup> for here is the Metaurus, the glory of which river was won in a single day but has endured through the ages, as though even now it swept bloody corpses down its empurpled waters into Dalmatia's seas.

8. As for the other towns on the Flaminian road, I just entered and then left them, passing on with Picenum on my left and Umbria on my right; but there either the wind Atabulus<sup>2</sup> from Calabria or the malarial district of Etruria intoxicated my lungs with poisonous blasts of air that brought on sweats and chills alternately, and infected my whole body with its atmosphere. Meanwhile fever and thirst made havoc of the innermost recesses of my heart and marrow; to their greedy claims I kept promising not only the deliciousness of springs and the deep-hidden waters of wells (though I reckoned on these also), but all the streams that lay on my route or near it, those of Velinus<sup>3</sup> glassy, of Clitumnus cool, of the Anio blue, of Nar smacking of sulphur, of the Fabaris<sup>4</sup> clear, of the Tiber muddy; but caution ever balked my longing. 9. Amid this distress Rome burst upon my sight. I thought I could drink dry not only its aqueducts but the ponds used in its mock sea-fights. But before allowing myself to set foot even on the outer boundary of the city I sank on my knees at the triumphal thresholds of the Apostles,<sup>5</sup>

<sup>5</sup> The churches of St. Peter and St. Paul. St. Peter's, founded by Constantine and consecrated in A.D. 326, was still outside the city precincts. The basilica of St. Paul (S. Paolo fuori le Mura) was founded in A.D. 386. *Triumphalibus* was perhaps suggested by Porta Triumphalis, the gateway by which a general's triumphal procession entered Rome.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

sensi membris male fortibus explosum esse languorem; post quae caelestis experimenta patrocinii conducti devorsorii parte susceptus atque etiam nunc istaec inter iacendum scriptitans quieti pauxillum operam impendo. 10. neque adhuc principis aulicorumque tumultuosis foribus obversor. interveni etenim nuptiis patricii Ricimeris, cui filia perennis Augusti in spem publicae securitatis copulabatur. igitur nunc in ista non modo personarum sed etiam ordinum partiumque laetitia Transalpino tuo latere conducibilis visum, quippe cum hoc ipso tempore, quo haec mihi exarabantur, vix per omnia theatra macella, praetoria fora, templa gymnasia Thalassio Fescenninus explicaretur, atque etiam nunc e contrario studia sileant negotia quiescant iudicia conticescant, differantur legationes vacet ambitus et inter scurrilitates histrionicas totus actionum seriarum status peregrinetur. 11. iam quidem virgo tradita est, iam coronam sponsus, iam palmatam consularis, iam cycladem pronuba, iam togam [senator]<sup>1</sup> honoratus, iam paenulam deponit inglorius, et nondum tamen cuncta thalamorum pompa defremuit, quia necdum ad mariti domum nova nupta migravit. qua festivitate decursa cetera tibi laborum meorum molimina reserabuntur, si

<sup>1</sup> senator *seclusit* Luctjohann.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Carm.* 2. 484 n.

<sup>2</sup> *Thalassio* (or *Talassio*) was properly the cry with which the bride was greeted by her attendants on entering her new home, but it became a general expression of good wishes to the happy couple. Its origin is uncertain. Livy gives a quaint story to account for it (I. 9. 11 sq.).

## BOOK I. v. TO HERONIUS

and straightway I felt that all the sickness had been driven from my enfeebled limbs; after which proof of heavenly protection I found quarters in a hired lodging, and even now I pen these words at intervals in my repose, for I am making rest my business for a little while. 10. Up till now I have not presented myself at the bustling doors of the Emperor and his courtiers, for I arrived here at the moment of the marriage of Ricimer the patrician, whose union with the daughter of the immortal Augustus is a hopeful guarantee of the safety of the state.<sup>1</sup> So for the present, amid this general rejoicing not merely of individuals but of classes and parties, the best course for your friend from over the Alps seemed to be to lie low, for at the very moment that I am writing this the shouts of "Thalassio"<sup>2</sup> according to Fescennine custom have hardly ceased to echo in every theatre, market-place, camp, law-court, church and playground; on the other hand, the schools<sup>3</sup> are still silent, business is hushed, lawsuits are stilled, delegations from the provinces are adjourned, place-seeking takes a holiday, and while buffoons are making their merry jests all serious business seems to be away on its travels. 11. And now the bride has been given away, the bridegroom has put off his garland, the consular his embroidered robe, the brideswoman her gay mantle, the man of rank his toga, and the undistinguished citizen his cloak; nevertheless, the full pomp of the bridal ceremony has not yet subsided, for the bride has not yet passed to her husband's home. When all this gaiety has run its course I will disclose to you the other struggles

<sup>1</sup> Or possibly "factions," "political antagonisms."

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

tamen vel consummata sollemnitas aliquando terminaverit istam totius civitatis occupatissimam vacationem. vale.

### VI

#### SIDONIUS EVTROPIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Olim quidem scribere tibi concupiscebam, sed nunc vel maxime impellor, id est cum mihi ducens in urbem Christo propitiante via carpitur. scribendi causa vel sola vel maxima, quo te scilicet a profundo domesticae quietis extractum ad capessenda militiae Palatinae munia vocem. . . . 2. his additur quod munere dei tibi congruit aevi corporis animi vigor integer; dein quod equis, armis, veste sumptu famulicio instructus solum, nisi fallimur, incipere formidas et, cum sis alacer domi, in aggredienda peregrinatione trepidum te iners desperatio facit; si tamen senatorii seminis homo, qui cotidie trabeatis proavorum imaginibus ingeritur, iuste dicere potest semet peregrinatum, si semel et in iuventa viderit domicilium legum, gymnasium litterarum, curiam dignitatum, verticem mundi, patriam libertatis, in

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\* This letter is usually assigned to A.D. 455, when Sidonius was on his way to Rome in the train of Avitus, but it may have been written four or five years later, as Sidonius was again in Rome in the year 459 or (more probably) 460; see I. 11. 3 n. It seems to have had an immediate effect: see III. 6. There is no need to assume that either Eutropius or Sidonius held a public appointment under Avitus; their "old partnership in the civil service," referred to in III. 6. 1, may well have been in the reign of Majorian. Eutropius rose to be Praetorian Prefect of Gaul under Anthemius.

<sup>1</sup> i.e. from Gaul to Rome.

## BOOK I. VI. TO EUTROPIUS

of my toilsome adventure, at least if sooner or later the completion of the celebration shall end this most busy holiday of a whole city. Farewell.

### VI

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND EUTROPIUS, GREETING \*

1. I have long been wanting to write to you, but now I am especially drawn to do so at the moment when by the grace of Christ's atonement I am treading the path which leads to the City. My one reason—at any rate my chief one—is to draw you out from the depths of your domestic calm and to invite you to take up the duties of the Palatine imperial service. . . . 2. Besides all this, you are by the favour of heaven in the prime of life, and possess strength of body and mind to correspond; then you are well furnished with horses, armour, raiment, money and servants, and (unless I am wrong) you only dread beginning, and though you have an energetic spirit at home, an unenterprising nervousness makes you alarmed about attempting foreign travel<sup>1</sup>—if indeed a man of senatorial descent, who every day rubs shoulders with the figures of his ancestors arrayed in robes of state,<sup>2</sup> can fairly say that he has travelled to foreign parts, when once he has seen—and seen with the eyes of youth—the home of laws, the training-school of letters, the assembly-hall of high dignitaries, the head of the universe, the mother-city of liberty, the one

<sup>1</sup> Sabinus, consul in A.D. 316, was an ancestor of Eutropius: see III. 6. 3, and, for the meaning of *trabea*, n. on *Carm.* XV. 150.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

qua unica totius orbis civitate soli barbari et servi peregrinantur. 3. et nunc, pro pudor, si relinquere inter busequas rusticanos subulcosque ronchantes! quippe si et campum stiva tremente proscindas aut prati floreas opes panda curvus falce populeris aut vineam palmite gravem cernuus rastris fossor invertas, tunc tibi est summa votorum beatitudo. quin potius expergiscere et ad maiora se pingui otio marcidus et enervis animus attollat. non minus est tuorum natalium viro personam suam excolere quam villam. 4. ad extremum, quod tu tibi iuventutis exercitium appellas, hoc est otium veteranorum, in quorum manibus effetis enses robiginosi sero ligone mutantur. esto, multiplicatis tibi spumabunt musta vinetis, innumeros quoque cumulos frugibus rupta congestis horrea dabunt, densum pecus gravidis uberibus in mulctram per antra olida caularum pinguis tibi pastor includet: quo spectat tam faeculento patrimonium promovisse compendio et non solum inter ista sed, quod est turpius, propter ista latuisse? non nequiter te concilii tempore post sedentes censentesque iuvenes inglorium rusticum, senem stantem latitabundum pauperis honorati sententia premat, cum eos quos

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<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* all who are not slaves or "barbarians" are citizens of Rome, so when in Rome they cannot be foreigners.



## BOOK I. VI. TO EUTROPIUS

community in the whole world in which only slaves and barbarians are foreigners.<sup>1</sup> 3. And now, for shame if you are to be left behind amongst bumpkin cowmen and snorting swineherds! If you can hold a shaky plough-handle and cut up the field, or if, stooping over the curved sickle, you can prune the flowery wealth of the meadow, or if as a down-bent delver you can turn up with your hoe the vineyard laden with heavy growth, that, forsooth, is the supreme happiness to which you aspire! Nay, rouse yourself, and let your spirit, which is faint and nerveless through obese idleness, rise to greater things. A man of your birth must needs cultivate his reputation just as diligently as his farm. 4. To conclude, what you are pleased to call the drill of youth is properly the repose of veterans, in whose toil-worn hands rusted swords are exchanged for the mattock of old age. Granted that your vats will foam with the produce of your extended vineyards, that your barns will show corn heaped in countless piles until they burst, that your well-fed shepherd will drive a crowded flock with full udders to the milking-pail through the odorous entrances of your sheep-folds: but of what use is it to have increased your inheritance by so dirty an economy and at the same time to have remained in obscurity not only *amid* such surroundings, but (what is more shameful) *for the sake of them*? Would it not be a wicked thing if on the day of assembly you in your old age were to stand behind your juniors while they are seated and taking part in the debate,—you an inglorious rustic shrinking from sight and bowing before the authoritative pronouncement of some poor man come to high place, having realised with

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

esset indignum si vestigia nostra sequerentur videris dolens antecessisse? 5. sed quid plura? si pateris hortantem, conatum tuorum socius adiutor, praevis particeps ero. sin autem inlecebrosis deliciarum cassibus involutus mavis, ut aiunt, Epicuri dogmatibus copulari, qui iactura virtutis admissa summum bonum sola corporis voluptate determinat, testor ecce maiores, testor posteros nostros huic me noxae non esse confinem. vale.

### VII

#### SIDONIUS VINCENTIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Angit me casus Arvandi nec dissimulo quin angat. namque hic quoque cumulus accedit laudibus imperatoris, quod amari palam licet et capite damnatos. amicus homini fui supra quam morum eius facilitas varietasque patiebantur. testatur hoc propter ipsum nuper mihi invidia conflata, cuius me paulo incautiores flamma detorruit. 2. sed quod in amicitia steti, mihi debui. porro autem in natura ille non habuit diligentiam perseverandi: libere queror, non insultatorie, quia fidelium consilia despiciens fortunae ludibrium per omnia fuit.

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\* Nothing is known of this Vincentius.

<sup>1</sup> See Introd., p. xli.

## BOOK I. VII. TO VINCENTIUS

remorse that men, in whose case it would have been a scandal if they had even followed in our steps, have passed you in the race? 5. Well, what need to say more? If you submit to these exhortations I am ready to be your comrade and helper, the guide and the partner of your efforts. If, however, you let yourself be entangled in the tempting snares of luxury and prefer (as people say) to be tied up with the dogmas of Epicurus, who makes jettison of virtue and defines the supreme good in terms of bodily pleasure alone, then here and now I call our ancestors and our posterity to witness that I have nothing to do with such wickedness. Farewell.

### VII

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND VINCENTIUS, GREETING \*

1. I am distressed by the fall of Arvandus<sup>1</sup> and do not conceal my distress; for it is the crowning glory of our Emperor that affection may be openly shown even for men condemned to death. I have shown myself this man's friend even more than his easy-going and unstable character justified, as is proved by the disfavour which has lately flared up against me on his account; for I have been rather too heedless and have scorched myself in its flame. 2. But such steadfastness in friendship was a duty which I owed to myself. On the other hand, he never had in his disposition any firmness of principle; and I complain of him frankly (but not spitefully) for scorning the advice of his loyal friends and so becoming the sport of fortune all through.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

dēnique non eum aliquando cecidisse<sup>1</sup> sed tam diu stetisse plus miror. o quotiens saepe ipse se adversa perpersum gloriabatur, cum tamen nos ab adfectu profundiore ruituram eius quandoque temeritatem miseraremur, definientes non esse felicem qui hoc frequenter potius esse quam semper iudicaretur! 3. sed damnationis<sup>1</sup> suae ordinem exposcis. salva fidei reverentia, quae amico debetur etiam afflicto, rem breviter exponam. praefecturam primam gubernavit cum magna popularitate consequentemque cum maxima populatione. pariter onere depressus aeris alieni metu creditorum successuros sibi optimates aemulabatur. omnium colloquia ridere, consilia mirari, officia contemnere, pati de occurrentum raritate suspicionem, de adsiduitate fastidium, donec, odii publici mole vallatus et prius cinctus custodia quam potestate discinctus, captus destinatusque pervenit Romam, ilico tumens, quod prospero cursu procellosum Tusciae litus enavigasset, tamquam sibi bene conscio ipsa quodammodo elementa famularentur. 4. in Capitolio custodiebatur ab hospite Flavio Asello, comite sacrarum largitionum, qui adhuc in eo semifumantem praefecturae nuper extortae dignitatem venerabatur. interea legati provinciae Galliae, Tonantius Ferreolus praefectorius, Afranii Syagrii consulis e filia nepos, Thaumastus

<sup>1</sup> dampnationis *T*: gubernationis.

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<sup>1</sup> Minister of Finance. See Bury I. 51.

<sup>2</sup> n. on *Carm.* 24. 34.

<sup>3</sup> n. on *Carm.* 24. 36.

## BOOK I. VII. TO VINCENTIUS

In brief, I am not so much surprised that he has fallen at last as that he has held his own so long. How often he used to boast of himself as one who had often endured ill fortune, whilst we from a deeper feeling for him lamented that his recklessness must some day end in disaster, holding that a man is not fortunate if he is judged to be so only frequently, not always! 3. You ask me to tell the story of his condemnation. I will give you the facts shortly whilst paying all respect to the loyalty which is due even to a fallen friend. He conducted his first term as prefect with great approbation, his second with the greatest depredation. Moreover, he was oppressed by the burden of debt and, dreading his creditors, felt jealous of those nobles who were likely successors to him. He mocked every one of them when they conversed with him, professed astonishment at their suggestions, and ignored their services; if only few sought to accost him he nursed suspicion, if many, contempt; till in the end he was encircled by a wall of general antipathy, and was burdened by guards before he was disburdened of his office. He was arrested and brought in bonds to Rome, priding himself then and there on having sailed safely past the stormy coast of Tuscany, as though the elements were in some way submissive to him, recognising the clearness of his conscience. 4. He was kept under guard on the Capitol by his friend Flavius Asellus, Count of the Sacred Largesses,<sup>1</sup> who respected the lingering aroma of the prefectorian dignity which had just been wrested from him. Meanwhile the deputies of the province of Gaul, Tonantius Ferreolus,<sup>2</sup> of prefectorian rank, grandson of the Consul Afranius Syagrius<sup>3</sup> through

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

quoque et Petronius, maxima rerum verborumque scientia praediti et inter principalia patriae nostrae decora ponendi, praevium Arvandum publico nomine accusaturi cum gestis decretalibus insequuntur. 5. qui inter cetera quae sibi provinciales agenda mandaverant interceptas litteras deferebant, quas Arvandi scriba correptus dominum dictasse profitebatur. haec ad regem Gothorum charta videbatur emitti, pacem cum Graeco imperatore dissuadens, Britannos supra Ligerim sitos impugnari oportere demonstrans, cum Burgundionibus iure gentium Gallias dividi debere confirmans, et in hunc ferme modum plurima insana, quae iram regi feroci, placido verecundiam inferrent. hanc epistulam laesae maiestatis crimine ardere iurisconsulti interpretabantur. 6. me et Auxanium, praestantissimum virum, tractatus iste non latuit, qui Arvandi amicitias quoquo genere incursas inter ipsius adversa vitare perfidum barbarum ignavum computabamus. deferimus igitur nil tale metuenti totam per<niciter<sup>1</sup>> machinam, quam summo artificio acres et flammei viri oculere in tempus iudicii meditabantur, scilicet

<sup>1</sup> perniciter machinam *Luetjohann vix probabiliter*: per(i)-machiam *codd. fere omnes*.

<sup>1</sup> n. on *Carm.* 24. 85.

<sup>2</sup> An eminent lawyer, *vir illustris*. It was at his instance that Sidonius added Bk. VIII. to his collection of letters.

<sup>3</sup> Anthemius.

<sup>4</sup> i.e. the Bretons of Armorica: see *Introd.*, p. xii, n. 1. Euric soon acted in accordance with this advice of Arvandus (*ib.*, p. xxviii).

<sup>5</sup> i.e. make him ashamed of his inactivity, shame him out of his peacefulness.

## BOOK I. VII. TO VINCENTIUS

his daughter, and Thaumastus<sup>1</sup> and Petronius,<sup>2</sup> men possessed of ripe experience and consummate oratorical skill and entitled to rank amongst the chief glories of our native land, followed in his wake, carrying the official resolutions, having been appointed to accuse him on behalf of the province. 5. Amongst other pleas which the provincials had instructed them to urge, they were bringing against him an intercepted letter which Arvandus's secretary (who had been arrested) admitted to have been written at his master's dictation. It appeared to be a message addressed to the king of the Goths, dissuading him from peace with the "Greek Emperor,"<sup>3</sup> insisting that the Britanni settled to the north of the Liger<sup>4</sup> should be attacked, and declaring that the Gallic provinces ought according to the law of nations to be divided up with the Burgundians, and a great deal more mad stuff in the same vein, fitted to rouse a warlike king to fury and a peaceful one to shame.<sup>5</sup> The opinion of the lawyers was that this letter was red-hot treason. 6. These proceedings did not escape my excellent friend Auxanius<sup>6</sup> and myself, and we thought it would be disloyal, inhuman and cowardly to disown our friendly relations with Arvandus in his time of danger, no matter how we had been drawn into them. So we promptly reported to the unfortunate man, who had no fear of anything of the sort, the whole machination, which his eager and fiery enemies were most cunningly planning to keep secret till the day of the trial; for they knew,

<sup>6</sup> This Auxanius afterwards adopted the monastic life, if, as is probable, he is the Auxanius mentioned in VII. 17. 4. His father had been Praetorian Prefect of Gaul (§ 7 below).

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

ut adversarium incautum et consiliis sodalium repudiatis soli sibi temere fidentem professione responsi praecipitis involverent. dicimus ergo quid nobis, quid amicis secretioribus tutum putaretur; suademus nil quasi leve fatendum, si quid ab inimicis etiam pro levissimo flagitaretur: ipsam illam dissimulationem tribulosissimam fore, quo facilius exitiosam suscitant illi persuasionem securitatis.<sup>1</sup>

7. quibus agnitis proripit sese atque in convicia subita prorumpens: "abite degeneres," inquit, "et praefectoriis patribus indigni, cum hac superforanea trepidatione; mihi, quia nihil intellegitis, hanc negotii partem sinite curandam; satis Arvando conscientia sua sufficit; vix illud dignabor admittere, ut advocati mihi in actionibus repetundarum patrocinentur." discedimus tristes et non magis iniuria quam maerore confusi; quis enim medicorum iure moveatur quotiens desperatum furor arripiat?

8. inter haec reus noster aream Capitolinam percurrere albatus; modo subdolis salutationibus pasci, modo crepantes adulationum bullas ut recognoscens libenter audire, modo serica et gemmas et pretiosa quaeque trapezitarum involucra rimari et quasi mercaturus inspicere prensare, depretiari<sup>2</sup> devolvere,

<sup>1</sup> exit. s. i. p. s. ego desperanter; codices varie et graviter corrupti sunt.

<sup>2</sup> depretiari deponens ἀπ. λεγ.: fortasse depretiare scribendum; cf. II. 10. 6, Carm. 22. 203.

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<sup>1</sup> A broad esplanade on the top of the Capitoline Hill. About half-way along it was the historic temple of Jupiter, now a sad ruin owing to the recent Vandal depredations (A.D. 455).



## BOOK I. VII. TO VINCENTIUS

of course, that their opponent was incautious, that he had rejected the advice of his friends and was rashly trusting in his own powers, and so they hoped to entangle him in an avowal through some hasty reply. We told him, therefore, what we and his less open friends thought to be the safe course: we suggested to him that he should make no admission on the assumption that it was a trivial matter, even if his opponents in pressing him for it implied that it was the most trivial matter in the world: we warned him that that very pretence was going to be the most serious danger to him, its aim being to produce more easily in him a fatal sense of security. 7. When he realised our drift he started forward and in a moment burst into violent taunts: "Off with you, degenerate cravens," he said, "unworthy of your prefect-fathers—off with you and your uncalled-for panic! Let me look after this side of the business, since you have no comprehension of it; for Arvandus his consciousness of innocence is enough; only with difficulty shall I bring myself even to allow advocates to defend me on the charge of extortion." We went away disheartened and upset, by grief more than by resentment; for what physician would have a right to become excited when a patient beyond hope of recovery is seized by a fit of madness? 8. Meanwhile our accused friend briskly parades the Capitoline Terrace<sup>1</sup> in festal dress; now he gloats over various knavish salutations given him, now he listens with pleasure to the bursting bubbles of flattery, seeming to recognise them as his due; again, he pries into silk wares, jewels and all the costly cases of the goldsmiths, and (as if he meant to make a purchase) scans them closely, snatches them

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

et inter agendum multum de legibus, de temporibus, de senatu, de principe queri, quod se non prius quam discuterent ulciscerentur. 9. pauci mediis dies, et in tractatorio frequens senatus (sic post comperi; nam inter ista discesseram). procedit noster ad curiam paulo ante detonsus pumicatusque, cum accusatores semipullati atque concreti nuntios a decemviris opperirentur et ab industria squalidi praeripuissent reo debitam miserationem sub invidia sordidatorum. citati intromittuntur: partes, ut moris est, e regione consistunt. offertur prae-fectoriis ante propositionis exordium ius sedendi: Arvandus iam tunc infelici impudentia concito gradu mediis prope iudicum sinibus ingeritur; Ferreolus circumstantibus latera collegis verecunde ac leviter in imo subselliorum capite consedit, ita ut non minus legatum se quam senatorem reminisceretur, plus ob hoc postea laudatus honoratusque. 10. dum haec, et qui procerum defuerant adfuerunt: consurgunt partes legatique proponunt. epistula post provinciale mandatum, cuius supra mentio facta, profertur; atque, cum sensim recitaretur, Arvandus necdum interrogatus se dictasse proclamat. re-

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<sup>1</sup> Criminal charges against senators were at this time regularly judged by five senators chosen by lot, sitting under the presidency of the Prefect of the City. This limitation of number was apparently not enforced in cases of high treason.

## BOOK I. VII. TO VINCENTIUS

up, disparages them and flings them back, and in the midst of this business makes frequent criticisms of the laws, the times, the Senate, and the Emperor for not vindicating him before investigating his case. 9. A few days elapsed, and then a full senate met in the Council Chamber (so I learned afterwards, for I had left Rome in the interval). Our man makes his way to the Senate-house, having shortly before been shaved and rubbed down, while his accusers, in half-mourning and unkempt, await a summons from the ten judges,<sup>1</sup> having by their intentional squalor robbed the accused of his due sympathy, availing themselves of the indignation which the sight of men in the garb of sorrow arouses. They are summoned and admitted; the two sides take their positions as usual, one opposite the other. Those of prefectorian rank are offered, before the indictment is begun, the privilege of being seated. Arvandus, even thus early, with unhappy self-assertion makes a rush and seizes a place almost in the laps of his judges; on the other hand, Ferreolus takes his seat modestly and quietly at the lowest end of the benches with his colleagues standing on either side, thus showing that he remembered that he was a delegate as well as a senator; for which action he was afterwards all the more complimented and honoured. 10. Meanwhile those of the magnates who had not attended at the beginning arrived; the opponents rose in their places and the delegates set out their case. After the commission from the province the letter which we have mentioned above was produced. It was being slowly read when Arvandus, without waiting to be questioned, cried out that he had dictated it. The delegates replied

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

spondere legati, quamquam valde nequiter, constaret quod ipse dictasset. at ubi se furens ille quantumque caderet ignarus bis terque repetita confessione transfodit, acclamatur ab accusatoribus, conclamatur a iudicibus reum laesae maiestatis confitentem teneri. ad hoc et milibus formularum iuris id sancientum iugulabatur. 11. tum demum laboriosus tarda paenitudine loquacitatis impalluisse perhibetur, sero cognoscens posse reum maiestatis pronuntiari etiam eum qui non adfectasset habitum purpuratorum. confestim privilegiis geminae praefecturae, quam per quinquennium repetitis fascibus rexerat, exauguratus et, plebeiae familiae non ut additus sed ut redditus, publico carceri adiudicatus est. illud sane aerumnosissimum, sicuti narravere qui viderant, quod, quia se sub atratis accusatoribus exornatum ille politumque iudicibus intulerat, paulo post, cum duceretur addictus, miser nec miserabilis erat. quis enim super statu eius nimis inflecteretur, quem videret accuratum delibutumque lautumiis aut

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<sup>1</sup> Arvandus, with his wide legal experience, cannot have been as ignorant as Sidonius supposes. The reason of his astounding confidence may have been that Ricimer had secretly supported his treasonable designs and Arvandus counted on his potent help. See Stevens, pp. 106 ff. (though he, like Hodgkin, II. 464, inadvertently takes *adfect. hab. purp.* to mean "had assumed the purple").

<sup>2</sup> It was common, perhaps usual, for a person condemned on his own confession to be committed to prison while awaiting sentence. Sidonius seems to imply that if Arvandus had not been a parvenu he would have been put under a milder form of custody, being committed to the charge of one or two persons pledged to produce him at the right time.

## BOOK I. VII. TO VINCENTIUS

(very mischievously, indeed) that it should be taken as an agreed point that he had dictated it. But when the madman, not realising his blunder, repeated his avowal two or three times and so dealt himself his death-blow, the accusers raised a shout in which the judges joined, declaring that the accused was guilty of high treason on his own confession. Besides this, thousands of legal precedents sanctioning the extreme penalty were aimed at his throat. 11. Then, and not till then, it is reported, did he show distress. His face grew pale as he tardily regretted his talkativeness, realising all too late that a man could be declared guilty of high treason even although he had not aspired to the purple.<sup>1</sup> He was instantly deprived by solemn procedure of the privileges appertaining to the double prefectship, which he had held by reappointment for five years, and he was consigned to the state prison as one not degraded but rather restored to a plebeian family.<sup>2</sup> The bitterest affliction of all (as those who watched the scene have related) was that, because he had marched into the presence of his judges elegantly dressed and groomed whilst his accusers were in dark clothing, the pitiable plight in which he appeared only a little later evoked no pity, as he was dragged off to prison after his commitment. For who would distress himself greatly about the position of one whom he saw being carried off to the quarries or the convict-prison<sup>3</sup> punctiliously

<sup>3</sup> *Ergastula* were slave-prisons, where slaves chosen for hard, rough labour (often as a punishment) were quartered, being chained at night and sometimes even working in chains. Under the Empire there were public *ergastula*, to which convicts as well as slaves were sent.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

ergastulo inferri? 12. sed et iudicio vix per hebdomadam duplicem comperendinato capite multatus in insulam coniectus est serpentis Epidauri, ubi usque ad inimicorum dolorem devenustatus et a rebus humanis veluti vomitu fortunae nauseantis exsputus nunc ex vetere senatus consulto Tiberiano triginta dierum vitam post sententiam trahit, uncum et Gemonias et laqueum per horas turbulenti carnificis horrescens. 13. nos quidem, prout valemus, absentes praesentesque vota facimus, preces supplicationesque geminamus, ut suspensio ictu iam iamque mucronis exserti pietas Augusta seminecem quamquam publicatis bonis vel exsilio muneretur. illo tamen, seu exspectat extrema quaeque seu sustinet, infelicius nihil est, si post tot notas inustas contumeliasque aliquid nunc amplius quam vivere timet. vale.

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<sup>1</sup> *Sed et* is not very clear. The meaning seems to be: "but he was actually (*et*) sentenced to *death* (not merely to the quarries or the convict-prison)."

<sup>2</sup> The *Insula Tiberina*, on which stood a temple of *Aesculapius*.

<sup>3</sup> Under *Tiberius* the period was ten days. A law of *Theodosius*, which allowed a reprieve of thirty days in the case of an Imperial sentence, presumably caused a similar extension in the case of the senatorial courts.

## BOOK I. VII. TO VINCENTIUS

dressed and perfumed? 12. But he, indeed,<sup>1</sup> after an adjournment of the sentence for a bare fortnight, was sentenced to death and flung into prison in the island of the Serpent of Epidaurus,<sup>2</sup> where he has been stripped of his elegance to a point at which even his opponents are distressed; and having been spewed out of society as though fortune threw him up in a fit of sickness, he is now dragging out the period of thirty days after his sentence as fixed by an ancient *senatus consultum* of the Emperor Tiberius,<sup>3</sup> living in hourly terror of the hook, the Stairs,<sup>4</sup> and the noose of a savage<sup>5</sup> executioner. 13. As for us, whether at Rome or away from it, we offer vows and reiterate prayers and supplications to the extent of our powers, entreating that the Imperial generosity may, even at the cost of the confiscation of his property or exile, show favour to this half-dead man by holding back the stroke of the sword which threatens every moment to be loosed upon him. But as for him, whether he is now waiting for the worst or already enduring it, he is certainly the most hapless of beings if with the brand of all those ignominies and humiliations upon him there is anything he now dreads more than life. Farewell.

<sup>1</sup> The *Scalae Gemoniae* were on the Capitoline slope, near the old prison, but their exact position is uncertain. To these stairs the executioner dragged by a hook the bodies of criminals, which were exposed there for some days and then dragged to the Tiber.

<sup>5</sup> Sidonius uses *turbulentus* in the sense of *truculentus*.

# THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

## VIII

### SIDONIUS CANDIDIANO SVO SALVTEM

1. Morari me Romae congratularis; id tamen quasi facete et fatigationum salibus admixtis: ais enim gaudere te quod aliquando necessarius tuus videam solem, quem utique perraro bibitor Araricus inspexerim. nebulas enim mihi meorum Lugdunensium exprobras et diem quereris nobis matutina caligine obstructum vix meridiano fervore reserari.

2. et tu istaec mihi Caesenatis furni potius quam oppidi verna deblateras? de cuius natalis tibi soli vel iucunditate vel commodo quid etiam ipse sentires, dum migras iudicavisti;<sup>1</sup> ita tamen quod te Ravennae felicius exsulantem auribus Padano culice perfossis municipalium ranarum loquax turba circumsilit. in qua palude indesinenter rerum omnium lege perversa muri cadunt aquae stant, turres fluunt naves sedent, aegri deambulant medici iacent, algent balnea domicilia conflaurant, sitiunt vivi natant sepulti, vigilant fures dormiunt potestates,

<sup>1</sup> indicasti *F.*

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\* Candidianus is not mentioned elsewhere.

<sup>1</sup> Modern Cesena, on the Via Aemilia, about 20 miles N.W. of Ariminum.



## BOOK I. VIII. TO CANDIDIANUS

### VIII

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND CANDIDIANUS, GREETING \*

1. You congratulate me on being still in Rome, but you do so in a witty sort of way and with a spice of banter, for you say you are delighted that I, a friend of yours, have at last got a view of the sun, which, as one who drank of the Arar, I have seen (you say) at all events very seldom. You bring up against me the fogs of my countrymen of Lugdunum and complain that with us the daylight is shut out by morning mist and scarcely revealed later by midday heat. 2. And do you talk this balderdash to me, you a native of Caesena,<sup>1</sup> which is an oven rather than a town? You have shown your own opinion of the attractiveness and amenities of that natal soil of yours by quitting it, though in your happier existence as an exile at Ravenna your ears are pierced by the mosquitoes of the Padus, and a chattering company of your fellow-burghers the frogs<sup>2</sup> keeps jumping about on every side of you. In that marshland the laws of nature are continually turned upside down; the walls fall and the waters stand, towers float and ships are grounded, the sick promenade and the physicians lie abed, the baths freeze and the houses burn, the living go thirsty and the buried swim, thieves keep vigil and authorities sleep, clerics prac-

<sup>2</sup> The frogs of Ravenna are mentioned by Martial, III. 93. 8. For a few of the features about to be mentioned cf. I. 5. 6. It is impossible to see the point of all the remarks in this section; no doubt they are much exaggerated.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

faenerantur clerici Syri psallunt, negotiatores militant milites<sup>1</sup> negotiantur, student pilae senes aleae iuvenes, armis cunuchi litteris foederati. 3. tu vide qualis sit civitas ubi tibi lar familiaris incolitur, quae facilius territorium potuit habere quam terram. quocirca memento innoxiiis Transalpinis esse parcendum, quibus caeli sui dote contentis non grandis gloria datur si deteriorum collatione clarescant. vale.

### IX

#### SIDONIUS HERONIO<sup>2</sup> SVO SALVTEM

1. Post nuptias patricii Ricimeris, id est post imperii utriusque opes eventilatas, tandem reditum

<sup>1</sup> monachi *LNTV*.

<sup>2</sup> herenio *LNTR*.

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<sup>1</sup> Canon law strictly forbade the clergy to practise usury.

<sup>2</sup> Syrians took a prominent part in trading and in financial operations all over the Empire. It may be that at this time, at least in Gaul, the word *Syrus* was used in the special sense of "banker" or "money-lender": see Friedlaender, *Sitten-geschichte*,<sup>10</sup> I. 378, who compares the mediaeval use of "Lombard." With reference to the present passage Hodgkin (I. 861, n. 1) ingeniously suggests that there may be an allusion to a tradition that "all the bishops of Ravenna for the first four centuries were of Syrian extraction." This seems very doubtful.

<sup>3</sup> In the later Empire the trading classes were excluded by law from the army and from the civil service, and, on the other

## BOOK I. IX. TO HERONIUS

wise usury<sup>1</sup> and Syrians<sup>2</sup> sing psalms, business men go soldiering and soldiers do business,<sup>3</sup> the old go in for ball-playing and the young for dicing, the eunuchs for arms and the federates<sup>4</sup> for culture. 3. I bid you look at the nature of the city where you have established your hearth and home, a city which found it easier to secure territory than to secure *terra firma*. So mind that you spare the harmless dwellers beyond the Alps, for they are quite content with the climate with which they have been endowed, and it is no great glory for them if they should shine by comparison with those that are worse. Farewell.

### IX

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND HERONIUS, GREETING \*

1. Since the wedding of the patrician Ricimer, that is to say after the wealth of two empires has been

hand, soldiers might not go into trade—though some laxity seems to have been allowed in their case. The juxtaposition of *milites* seems to show that *militare* is here used of service in the army, not, as was usual in this period, of a post in the civil service. For *milites* some MSS. read *monachi* ("monks"), which deprives the sentence of all point. Probably *milites* was accidentally omitted in the archetype because of its similarity to *militant* (this is a common form of scribal error); then someone, noticing that a noun was wanted, stupidly inserted *monachi* (perhaps suggested by *clerici* in the preceding sentence).

<sup>4</sup> For the meaning of *foederati* see *Introd.*, p. x, n. 2. The reference here is presumably to the federate troops of the garrison.

\* A continuation of the account begun in No. 5. The date of the letter is A.D. 468.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

est in publicam serietatem, quae rebus actitandis ianuam campumque patefecit. interea nos Pauli praefectorii tam doctrina quam sanctitate venerandis laribus excepti comiter blandae hospitalitatis officiis excolebamur. porro non isto quisquam viro est in omni artium genere praestantior. deus bone, quae ille propositionibus aenigmata, sententiis schemata, versibus commata, digitis mechanemata facit! illud tamen in eodem studiorum omnium culmen antevenit, quod habet huic eminenti scientiae conscientiam superiorem. igitur per hunc primum, si quis quoquo modo in aulam gratiae aditus, exploro; cum hoc confero, quinam potissimum procerum spebus valeret nostris opitulari. 2. nec sane multa cunctatio, quia pauci de quorum eligendo patrocinio dubitaretur. erant quidem in senatu plerique opibus culti genere sublimes, aetate graves consilio utiles, dignitate elati dignatione communes, sed servata pace reliquorum duo fastigatissimi consulares, Gennadius Avienus et Caecina Basilius, prae ceteris conspiciebantur. hi in amplissimo ordine seposita praerogativa partis armatae facile post purpuratum principem principes erant. sed inter hos quoque

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<sup>1</sup> Gennadius Avienus belonged to the family of the Corvini (§ 4). He was consul in A.D. 450. In 452 he accompanied Pope Leo I. and Trygetius as ambassador to Attila.

<sup>2</sup> Flavius Caecina Decius Maximus Basilius was Praetorian Prefect of Italy under Majorian (A.D. 458) and again under Severus (463-5); he was consul in A.D. 463.

<sup>3</sup> This refers not only to the personal predominance of Ricimer but to the marked tendency under his régime to exalt the military class (*i.e.* the holders, or former holders, of one of the high military offices) over the class of civil functionaries; for example, an ex-consul who belonged to the military class took precedence over other ex-consuls in the senatorial order. See Stein, p. 563.

## BOOK I. IX. TO HERONIUS

scattered to the winds, there has been a reversion to seriousness in public affairs, and this has opened a door and a field for the transaction of business. Meanwhile I had been welcomed in the home of Paulus, a man of prefectorian rank,—a home venerable for its learning as well as for its virtuousness, where I was receiving the kindly attentions of a genial hospitality. Besides, there is not a man anywhere more excellent than he in every department of culture. Kind heaven! With what ingenious subtleties he sets forth his theme! What apt figures adorn his thoughts, what nicely-measured phrases divide his verses, what works of art he creates with his fingers! And better still is the coping-stone of all his studies, namely, that he has a conscience which surpasses his brilliant erudition. And so he was the first friend through whom I sought to ascertain whether there was any possible way of approach to gain the favour of the court; with him I debated the question who in particular amongst the influential people would be able to aid my expectations. 2. There was really little hesitation about this, for there were very few whose claims as possible protectors were worth weighing. Certainly there were many in the Senate who were blessed with wealth and exalted in lineage, reverend in years and helpful in counsel, elevated by their dignity and yet accessible through their condescension; but (with all due respect to the rest) two consulars of the highest distinction, Genadius Avienus<sup>1</sup> and Caecina Basilius,<sup>2</sup> were conspicuous above their fellows. In the most elevated rank, if we leave out of account the privileged military class,<sup>3</sup> they stood easily next to the Emperor in the purple. But when we compare the two men we find even in

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

quamquam stupendi tamen varii mores et genij, potius quam ingenii similitudo. fabor namque super his aliqua succinctius. 3. Avienus ad consulatum felicitate, Basilius virtute pervenerat. itaque dignitatum in Avieno iucunda velocitas, in Basilio seranumerositas praedicabatur. utrumque quidem, si fors laribus egrediebantur, artabat clientum praevia pedisequa circumfusa populositas; sed longe in paribus dispaes sodalium spes et spiritus erant. Avienus, si quid poterat, in filiis generis fratribus provehendis moliebatur; cumque semper domesticis candidatis distringeretur, erga expediendas forinsecus ambientum necessitates minus valenter efficax erat. 4. et in hoc Corvinorum familiae Deciana praeferebatur, quod qualia impetrabat cinctus Avienus suis, talia conferebat Basilius discinctus alienis. Avieni animus totis et cito, sed infructuosius, Basili paucis et sero, sed commodius aperiabatur. neuter aditu difficili, neuter sumptuoso; sed si utrumque coluisses, facilius ab Avieno familiaritatem, facilius a Basilio beneficium consequere. 5. quibus diu utrimque libratis id tractatus mutuus temperavit, ut reservata senioris consularis reverentia, in domum cuius nec nimis raro venti-

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<sup>1</sup> *genii . . . ingenii*. See nn. on *Carm.* 2. 191 and 10. 20.

<sup>2</sup> Notes 1 and 2 on p. 384 will make this reference clear.

## BOOK I. IX. TO HERONIUS

their case that their characters, though both extraordinary, are nevertheless different, and there is more likeness in their dignity than in their disposition.<sup>1</sup> I will make some brief remarks about them. 3. Avienus had reached the consulship by good fortune, Basilius by his personal merit; so in the case of Avienus people commonly remarked upon the happy rapidity of his dignities and in the case of Basilius upon their tardy multiplicity. When either of them happened to go out of doors, he was encircled by a swarming mass of clients who preceded him, followed him, or walked at his side; but though so far there was likeness, the ambitions and tone of the two companies were very unlike. Avienus, so far as his influence extended, exerted himself in promoting his sons, sons-in-law, and cousins; and as he was always busy with candidates from his own family, he was less helpful in meeting the wants of place-seekers outside his circle. 4. A further reason which made the Decian clan preferable to that of the Corvini<sup>2</sup> was that such favours as Avienus when in office obtained for his relatives Basilius even when out of office bestowed on outsiders. Avienus revealed his mind to all, speedily but rather unprofitably; Basilius did so to few and tardily, but more beneficially. It was not difficult or expensive to get access to either of them; but if you sought the company of both you were more likely to get good-fellowship from Avienus and good deeds from Basilius. 5. When we had carefully weighed the considerations in favour of each, the discussion between us arrived at this compromise, that while still paying due respect to the elder consular, at whose house I was indeed a fairly frequent visitor,

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

tabamus, Basilianis potius frequentatoribus applicaremur. ilicet, dum per hunc amplissimum virum aliquid de legationis Arvernæ petitionibus elaboramus, ecce et Kalendæ Ianuariae, quæ Augusti consulis mox futuri repetendum fastis nomen opperiebantur. 6. tunc patronus: "heia," inquit, "Solli meus, quamquam suscepti officii onere pressaris, exseras volo in obsequium novi consulis veterem Musam votivum quippiam vel tumultuariis fidibus carminantem. praebebo admittendo aditum recitaturoque solacium recitantique suffragium. si quid experto credis, multa tibi seria hoc ludo promovebuntur." parui ego praeceptis, favorem ille non subtraxit iniunctis et impositae devotionis adstipulator invictus egit cum consule meo, ut me praefectum faceret senatui suo. 7. sed tu, ni fallor, epistolae perosus prolixitatem voluptuosius nunc opusculi ipsius relegendis versibus inmorabere. scio, atque ob hoc carmen ipsum loquax in consequentibus charta deportat, quæ pro me interim, dum venio, diebus tibi pauculis sermocinetur. cui si examinis tui quoque puncta tribuantur, aequè gratum mihi

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<sup>1</sup> These words show that Sidonius was not the only delegate, though he must have been the leader of the mission. Letter V. makes it clear that he had not travelled along with his colleagues.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. as Praefectus Vrbi.

<sup>3</sup> The Panegyric on Anthemius, *Carmen* II.



## BOOK I. ix. TO HERONIUS

I should attach myself more particularly to the train of Basilius. Well, while by the aid of this most distinguished man I was devising some move in the matter of the petitions of the Arvernian deputation,<sup>1</sup> lo and behold! the Kalends of January also loomed before us, the day on which the second appearance of Augustus on the list of chief magistrates was due, for our Emperor was about to become consul. 6. Then my patron said, "Come on, my dear Sollius, though you are sorely busied with the burden of the commission you have undertaken, I wish that you would, in humble duty to the new consul, draw out your old Muse from her retirement, and get her to chant some expression of good wishes, even if she has to strike up a hastily-improvised strain. I will give you the entry by passing you in, I will give you assistance when you are called on to read and support as you go on. Believe me as a man of experience, many serious concerns of yours will be greatly advanced by this sportive performance." I complied with his instructions, and he did not withdraw his support from the work he had charged me with; he gave his personal and irresistible backing to the tribute imposed upon me, and pressed the consul whose praises I had sung to appoint me as president of his Senate.<sup>2</sup> 7. However, unless I am mistaken, you are bored with the length of my letter, and will find it more pleasurable at this point to pass your time in reading the verses of the actual composition.<sup>3</sup> I understand, and accordingly this garrulous sheet carries you the poem itself added at the tail-end, to hold conversation with you on my behalf for a few days, until I arrive. And if it should get good marks from your examination also,

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

ac si me in comitio vel inter rostra cōtionante ad  
 sophos meum non modo lati clavi sed tribulium  
 quoque fragor concitaretur. sane moneo praeque de-  
 nuntio quisquiliis ipsas<sup>1</sup> Clus tuae hexametris minime  
 exaeques. merito enim conlata vestris mea carmina  
 non heroicorum phaleris sed epitaphistarum neniis  
 comparabuntur. 8. attamen gaude quod hic ipse  
 panegyricus etsi non iudicium certe eventum boni  
 operis accepit. quapropter, si tamen tetrica sunt  
 amoenanda iocularibus, volo paginam glorioso, id est  
 quasi Thrasoniano fine concludere Plautini Pyrgo-  
 polinici imitator. igitur cum ad praefecturam  
 sub ope Christi stili occasione pervenerim, iuberis  
 scilicet<sup>2</sup> pro potestate cinctuti undique omnium  
 laudum convasatis acclamationibus ad astra portare,  
 si placeo, eloquentiam, si displiceo, felicitatem.  
 videre mihi videor ut rideas, quia perspicis nostram  
 cum milite comico ferocisse iactantiam. vale.

<sup>1</sup> istas *Luetjohann frustra* ; *vid. Mohrii praef. p. xiv.*

<sup>2</sup> iuberis scilicet *ego* : iubeas ilicet *NCT* : iubeo te scilicet *Mohr.*

## BOOK I. IX. TO HERONIUS

that will be as acceptable to me as if I were holding forth in the Comitium or on the public platform and the clamour not only of the grandees but also of the humble citizens were breaking out in a "Bravo!" for me. I do indeed warn you and give you clear notice that you are on no account to compare this rubbish of mine with the hexameters of your epic Muse; for my strains, if compared with yours, will justly seem to resemble the dirges of tombstone-poets rather than the splendour of heroic bards. 8. Still, I want you to rejoice that this same panegyric, if it has not won critical approval, has at any rate had the practical success of a fine composition. Therefore, if serious subjects really ought to be brightened by jesting, I should like to finish off this column with an ending in a boastful tone, a Thraso-like ending,<sup>1</sup> in fact, and to become an imitator of the Pyrgopolinices of Plautus. So since I have, with Christ's help, been promoted to the Prefectship by the timely use of my pen, you must know that you are commanded by ministerial authority to heap together all the plaudits of all the praises in the world, and to exalt to the skies my eloquence if you are pleased with my work, my good fortune if you are dissatisfied with it. I can imagine myself seeing how you laugh on realising that my arrogance has gone wild in company with the soldier of the comedy. Farewell.

<sup>1</sup> Thraso and Pyrgopolinices are two boastful soldiers of Latin comedy, the former in the *Eunuchus* of Terence, the latter in the *Miles Gloriosus* of Plautus.

# THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

## X

### SIDONIUS CAMPANIANO SVO SALVTEM

1. Accepi per praefectum annonae litteras tuas, quibus eum tibi sodalem veterem mihi insinuas iudici novo. gratias ago magnas illi, maximas tibi, quod statuistis de amicitia mea vel praesumere tuta vel inlaesa credere. ego vero notitiam viri familiaritatemque non solum volens sed et avidus amplector, quippe qui noverim nostram quoque gratiam hoc obsequio meo fore copulatiorem. 2. sed et tu vigilantiae suae me, id est famae meae statum causamque commenda. vereor autem ne famem populi Romani theatralis caveae fragor insonet et infortunio meo publica deputetur esuries. sane hunc ipsum e vestigio ad portum mittere paro, quia comperi naves quinque Brundisio profectas cum speciebus tritici ac mellis ostia Tiberina tetigisse; quarum onera expectationi plebis, si quid strenue gerit, raptim faciet offerri, commendaturus se mihi, me populo, utrumque tibi. vale.

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\* Nothing further is known of Campanianus. The date of the letter is A.D. 468.

<sup>1</sup> The Praefectus Annonae worked under the Prefect of the City, who was ultimately responsible for the food-supply of Rome.

<sup>2</sup> Probably in a double sense. Sidonius in his new office of

## BOOK I. x. TO CAMPANIANUS

### X

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND CAMPANIANUS, GREETING \*

1. I have received your letter by the Prefect of the Food-Supply;<sup>1</sup> in it you commend him as an old comrade of yours to me as a new judge.<sup>2</sup> I thank him heartily and you most heartily that you have both decided either to count on my friendship's being safe or at least to believe that nothing has yet impaired it. For my part I accept the acquaintance and intimacy of your excellent friend not only with readiness but with enthusiasm, for I feel sure that our own mutual liking will become closer through this compliance on my part. 2. However, I should wish you also to recommend to his vigilance my own self, that is to say, the upholding and defence of my reputation. For I am afraid that the uproar of the theatre-benches may sound the cry of "starvation in Rome," and that the general famine may be put down to my luckless management. In fact I am proposing to send this very man down to the harbour without a moment's delay, for I have been informed that five ships hailing from Brundisium have reached the mouth of the Tiber with food-stuffs in the shape of wheat and honey; and if he is at all business-like he will see that their cargoes are promptly placed at the service of the expectant population. By so doing he will commend himself to me, me to the people, and both of us to yourself. Farewell.

Prefect of the City is a "new judge"; he is also invited to be a fresh judge of the character of the *praefectus annonae*.

# THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

## XI

### SIDONIUS MONTIUS SVO SALVTEM

1. Petis tibi, vir disertissime, Sequanos tuos expetituto satiram nescio quam, si sit a nobis perscripta, transmitti. quod quidem te postulasse deniror; non enim sanctum est ut de moribus amici cito perperam sentias. huic eram themati scilicet incubaturus id iam agens otii idque habens aevi. quod iuvenem militantemque dictasse praesumptiosum fuisset, publicasse autem periculosum? cui namque grammaticum vel salutanti Calaber ille non dixit:

“ si mala condiderit in quem quis carmina, ius est iudiciumque ”?

2. sed ne quid ultra tu de sodali simile credas, quid fuerit illud quod me sinistrae rumor ac fumus opinionis adflavit longius paulo sed ab origine exponam.

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\* Montius is not otherwise known. The incident here related is referred to in *Carm.* 12. 22; see note on that poem. The beginning of the letter seems to show that it was written very soon after the occurrence, the date of which is A.D. 461.

<sup>1</sup> The point of *perscripta* will be made clear in § 8.

<sup>2</sup> This sentence raises problems even when correctly construed, but it has been grossly abused through inattention to the Latin; for example, one of the ablest of recent writers on Sidonius infers from it that Sidonius still held a government appointment (“was still *militans*”) when he wrote the letter. Sidonius, who was little, if at all, over thirty at the time, playfully speaks as if his days of youth and official life were far behind him. He had recently retired from a government post in Rome (see § 3, *recenti commilitio*, and note on the passage) and had gone back to Auvergne (§ 4). Now he assumes the pose of a retired old fogey and talks airily of the

## XI

SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND MONTIUS,  
GREETING \*

1. You ask me, my most eloquent friend, now that you mean to visit your countrymen the Sequani, to send you some satire or other, if I have finished it.<sup>1</sup> Now I am much surprised that you have made such a request; for it is not decent of you so quickly to believe the worst of a friend's character. So you supposed, did you, that I was likely, after reaching such an age and retiring from active life, to spend pains upon a literary effort which in my young days, when I was in the government service, it would have been audacious for me to have composed and dangerous for me to have published?<sup>2</sup> Who that has even a nodding acquaintance with the schoolmaster has not been told by the poet of Calabria:

“ If ribald verse besmirch an honest name,  
The law shall see the offender put to shame ” ?<sup>3</sup>

2. However, to prevent you from entertaining such notions in future about your comrade, I will risk being rather long and tell from the beginning the whole story of the suspicion that was thrown on me by the chatter and smoke of malicious gossip. Under the

days when he was a young man in the civil service. Even if we take this to refer to some post under Avitus, about five years before the incident related in this letter, it is a jesting absurdity; but it may well refer to the *recens commilitum* of § 3. Thus the present passage throws no real light on the official career of Sidonius.

<sup>3</sup> Horace, *Sat.* II. 1. 82 sq.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

temporibus Augusti Maioriani venit in medium charta comitatum, sed carens indice, versuum plena satiricorum mordacium, sanè qui satis invectivaliter abusi nominum nuditate carpebant plurimum vitia, plus homines. inter haec fremere Arelatenses, quo loci res agebatur, et quaerere quem poetarum publici furoris merito pondus urgeret, his maxime auctoribus quos notis certis auctor incertus exacerbaverat.

3. accidit casu ut Catullinus inlustris tunc ab Arvernīs illo veniret, cum semper mihi tum praecipue commilitio recenti familiaris; saepe enim cives magis amicos peregrinatio facit. igitur insidias nescienti tam Paeonius quam Bigerrus has tetenderunt, ut plurimis coram tamquam ab incauto sciscitarentur, hoc novum carmen an recognosceret. et ille: "si dixeritis." cumque frustra diversa quasi per iocum effunderent, solvitur Catullinus in risum intempestivoque suffragio clamare coepit dignum poema quod perennandum apicibus auratis iuste tabula rostralis

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<sup>1</sup> *Carm.* 12 is addressed to him. In the superscription of that poem Catullinus is described as *vir clarissimus* (V. C.). He must have become *inlustris* before this letter was revised for publication, and Sidonius has punctiliously inserted his latest title, thus committing an unconscious anachronism. For the meaning of *inlustris* and *clarissimus* see note on § 6 below.

<sup>2</sup> No unprejudiced reader of this sentence could fail to conclude that Sidonius and Catullinus had held posts in the civil service at a very recent date, *i.e.* in 459 or (more probably) 460; but some scholars push the *recens commilitum* back five



## BOOK I. xi. TO MONTIUS

government of the Emperor Majorian there came into circulation in the court a sheet with no label attached, full of satirical and biting lines, actually making the most savage use of undisguised names, and attacking vices a great deal but men still more. At this the people of Arelate, which was the scene of the incident, began to rage and to cast about among our poets in order to discover which of them deserved to bear the brunt of the general indignation. The chief instigators of this inquiry were the infuriated victims whose identity this mysterious poet had revealed by indications that were no mystery. 3. It so happened that the Illustrious Catullinus<sup>1</sup> arrived at that time from Auvergne. He had always been my friend, and at that moment was particularly intimate with me, as we had recently been partners in the public service;<sup>2</sup> for a sojourn abroad<sup>3</sup> often makes fellow-citizens better friends. Well, Paconius and Bigerrus<sup>4</sup> together laid a trap for my unsuspecting friend. Designedly taking him off his guard, they asked him before a number of witnesses whether he recognised this new poem. "If you would be good enough to recite it," said he. They proceeded to spout sundry fragments as if it were all a jest; Catullinus burst into laughter, and with unseasonable approbation cried out that the poem deserved by right to be immortalised by being inscribed on a plate in letters of gold, to be set up on the Rostra or years or more, to the time of Avitus. The whole wording of the sentence is patently against this.

<sup>3</sup> For *peregrinari* used of an inhabitant of Gaul who goes to Rome compare I. 6. 2.

<sup>4</sup> All that is known of Paconius is contained in this letter; Bigerrus is otherwise unknown.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

acciperet aut etiam Capitolina. 4. Paëonius exarsit; cui satiricus ille morsum dentis igniti avidius impreserat, atque ad adstantes circulatores: "iniuriæ communis," inquit, "iam reum inveni. videtis ut Catullinus deperit risu: apparet ei nota memorari. nam quæ causa festinam compulit præcipitare sententiam, nisi quod iam tenet totum, qui de parte sic iudicat? atqui<sup>1</sup> Sidonius nunc in Arverno est; unde colligitur auctore illo, isto auditore rem textam." itur in furias inque convicia absentis nescientis innocentisque; conscientiae, fidei, quaestioni nil reservatur. sic levis turbæ facilitatem qua voluit et traxit<sup>2</sup> persona popularis. 5. erat enim ipse Paëonius populi totus, qui tribuniciis flatibus crebro seditionum pelagus impelleret. ceterum si requisisses: "qui genus, unde domo?", non eminentius quam municipaliter natus quemque inter initia cognosci claritas vitrici magis quam patris fecerit, identidem tamen per fas nefasque crescere adfectans pecuniaeque per avaritiam parcus, per ambitum prodigus. namque ut familiae superiori per filiam saltim quamquam honestissimam iungeretur, contra rigorem civici moris splendidam, ut ferunt, dotem Chremes noster Pamphilo suo dixerat. 6. cumque

<sup>1</sup> atqui *Mohr*: itaque.

<sup>2</sup> et traxit *L*: contraxit. *Fortasse attraxit (Luetjohann).*

<sup>1</sup> This may be (as has been suggested) a reference to the fact that some of Nero's verses were inscribed in gold letters and dedicated to Capitoline Jove (Suet. *Ner.* 10); but among the Romans the idea is older than the age of Nero (see Tac. *Ann.* III. 57 and 59, passages unknown to the *Thesaurus*, s.v. *aureus*), and we are told that the Greeks set up three of Chilon's wise sayings in letters of gold at Delphi (Plin. *N.H.* VII. 119). <sup>2</sup> Verg. *Aen.* VIII. 114.

<sup>3</sup> Pamphilus married the daughter of Chremes. The dowry was 10 talents (Terence, *Andria*, 950 sq.).

## BOOK I. XI. TO MONTIUS

even on the Capitol.<sup>1</sup> 4. Paeonius flared up (the satirist had quite savagely assailed him with the bite of his burning tooth) and said to the loungers who were standing by, "I have now found out the culprit in this attack on us all. You see how Catullinus is dying with laughter; obviously our tale is no news to him. What has made him blurt out such a hasty opinion? Surely a man who pronounces thus on a part of the work already knows the whole of it. Now Sidonius is at present in Auvergne; so we can infer that the thing was concocted with Sidonius as author and this gentleman as audience." They all began to rage and rail against me, absent as I was and unwitting and innocent; no room was left for fair dealing, honesty, or investigation. So Paeonius, who was a power with the populace, led the compliant crowd by the nose. 5. For this Paeonius was a demagogue all over, the sort of man who was always stirring up a sea of riots by his blasts of tribunician violence. But if the question had been asked, "Who is he by birth and whence does he come?"<sup>2</sup>—his parentage had no standing beyond what a provincial town can give, and in the beginning of his career he was better known by the eminence of his stepfather than by that of his father; but he made repeated efforts to rise by fair means or foul, and while his avarice made him stingy his ambition made him a wastrel. Desiring, even if other means should fail, to gain a connexion with a family of higher rank through his daughter (certainly a quite unexceptionable lady), our Chremes, they say, abandoned the hardness characteristic of his native place and promised his Pamphilus a splendid dowry.<sup>3</sup> 6. Later, when the

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

de capessendo diademate coniuratio Marcelliniana<sup>1</sup> coqueretur, nobilium iuventuti signiferum sese in factione praeberat, homo adhuc novus in senectute, donec aliquando propter experimenta felicitis audaciae natalium eius obscuritati dedit hiantis interregni rima fulgorem. nam vacante aula turbataque republica solus inventus est, qui ad Gallias administrandas fascibus prius quam codicillis ausus accingi mensibus multis tribunal inlustrum potestatum spectabilis praefectus escenderet, anno peracto militiae extremae terminum circa vix honoratus, numerariorum more seu potius advocatorum, quorum cum finiuntur actiones, tunc incipiunt dignitates. 7. igitur iste sic praefectorius, sic senator, cuius moribus quod praeconia competentia non ex asse persolvo, generi sui moribus debeo, multorum plus quam bonorum odia commovit adhuc ignoranti mihi, adhuc amico, tamquam saeculo meo canere solus versu valerem. venio Arelatem, nil adhuc (unde enim?) suspicans, quamquam putarer

<sup>1</sup> Marcelliniana vel Marcellini requiri admonet Mommsen, recte, ut videtur, nisi Marcellina scribas: marcell(i)ana codd.

<sup>1</sup> In spite of the confusion in the MSS., it seems reasonable to believe that the name here connected with the conspiracy is that of Marcellinus; see Intro., p. xxiii. Sidonius seems to imply that Marcellinus was a party to the plot; if this is so, he must have speedily withdrawn without committing himself deeply. We know that he soon became an active supporter of Majorian. The "interregnum" occurred between the death of Avitus and the accession of Majorian. It was an interregnum in a double sense, as there was no western Emperor and no Praetorian Prefect of Gaul.

<sup>2</sup> Praetorian Prefects received the rank of *inlustris* as a matter of course (n. on *Carm.* 7. 241), but Paeonius remained a *spectabilis* until his appointment was regularised. The *spectabiles* ranked below the *inlustres* and above the *clarissimi*. See Bury l. 19 sqq., Hodgkin l. 603, 620. Since the *vicarii* ranked as *spectabiles*, it is tempting to conjecture that

## BOOK I. XL. TO MONTIUS

conspiracy of Marcellinus<sup>1</sup> to assume the diadem was being hatched, he presented himself to the young nobles as their ringleader, still a "new man" in his old age; till in the end, thanks to some strokes of lucky audacity on his part, the chink of a gaping interregnum let in a ray of glory upon the obscurity of his birth. For the throne being vacant and the administration in a turmoil, he alone of all men was found bold enough to assume the government of Gaul by taking up the fasces before receiving his patent of office, and to mount for several months the tribunal of "illustrious" dignitaries as an "eminent" prefect,<sup>2</sup> so that he had barely gained his high dignity by the end of the year, toward the very close of his term of service, like the official cashiers, or rather the advocates, who receive their promotion just at the time when their activities are coming to an end.<sup>3</sup> 7. Well then, this man, thus risen to prefectorian and senatorial rank (and if I do not give a full advertisement of his character it is owing to my respect for the character of his son-in-law), stirred up ill-feeling against me amongst the many rather than amongst the good, while I was still ignorant of his doings, still his friend—as if I were the only man in my generation who could write poetry! I came to Arelate, still suspecting nothing (why should I?), although my enemies did not expect me to appear; and on the following

Paconius held the vicariate at the time when he took over the prefecture. If so, he may have acted partly at least from patriotic motives; as there was no one to carry on the Prefect's duties, the Vicar might feel bound to step in.

<sup>3</sup> The *numerarii* (cashiers in the office of the Praetorian Prefect) might expect to receive the rank of *tribunus*; the advocates attached to the Prefect's court might become Counts of the Consistory.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

ab inimicis non adfuturus, ac principe post diem vise in forum ex more descendo. quod ubi visum est, ilico expavit, ut ait ille, nil fortiter ausa seditio. alii tamen mihi plus quam deceret ad genua provolvi; alii, ne salutarent, fugere post statuas, oculi post columnas; alii tristes vultuosique iunctis mihi lateribus incedere. 8. hic ego quid sibi haec vellet in illis superbiae nimiae. nimiae in istis humilitatis forma mirari, nec ultro tamen causas interrogare, cum subornatus unus e turba factiosorum dat sese mihi consalutandum. tum procedente sermone: "cernis hos?" inquit. et ego: "video," inquam, "gestusque eorum miror equidem nec admiror." ad haec noster interpret: "ut satirographum te," inquit. "aut execrantur aut reformidant." "unde? cur? quando?" respondi; "quis crimen agnovit? quis detulit? quis probavit?" moxque subridens: "perge," inquam, "amice, nisi molestum est, et tumescentes nomine meo consulere dignare, utrumnam ille delator aut index, qui satiram me scripsisse confinxit, et perscripsisse confinxerit; unde forte sit tutius, si retractabunt, ut superbire desistant." 9. quod ubi nuntius rettulit, protinus cuncti non

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<sup>1</sup> Lucan V. 322 sq.

## BOOK I. XI. TO MONTIUS

day, having visited the Emperor, I walked down in the usual way to the Forum. This was observed, and thereupon panic filled what the poet calls

“The rout that dare not strike a manful blow.”<sup>1</sup>

Some indeed threw themselves at my feet with indecent servility; others, to avoid greeting me, ran behind statues and concealed themselves behind columns; others with downcast expression and long faces joined themselves on and walked at my side.

8. At this point I began to wonder what such a show of extravagant haughtiness in one party and extravagant abjectness in another could possibly mean, but I did not go out of my way to inquire into the reasons, until one of the aggressive rabble, who had been put up to the job, presented himself to me so as to make me greet him. Then as we went on talking he asked, “Do you see these gentlemen?” “I do,” said I, “and I find their behaviour more puzzling than pleasing.” “They look on you as a satirist,” said my instructor, “and curse or dread you accordingly.” “How so? Why? When?” I replied;

“Who discovered the wrongdoing? Who has informed against me? Who has proved the charge?” Then with a smile I added, “Go on, my friend, if you don’t mind, and be good enough to inquire as from me of those who are making all this stir whether the informer or spy who invented the story that I had composed a satire also invented the addition that I have finished writing it. So if these people will think over it they will perhaps find it safer to give up their insolent conduct.”

9. When the messenger brought back this answer, the whole company, not in a quiet way or one

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

modeste neque singuli sed propere et catervatim oscula ac dexteras mihi dederunt. solus Curio meus, in transfugarum perfidiam inductus, cum advesperasceret, per cathedrarios servos vispillionibus taetrioribus domum raptus ac reportatus est. 10. postridie iussit Augustus ut epulo suo circensibus ludis interessemus. primus iacebat cornu sinistro consulari ordinarius Severinus, vir inter ingentes principum motus atque inaequalem reipublicae statum gratiae semper aequalis; iuxta eum Magnus, olim ex praefecto, nuper ex consule, par honoribus persona geminatis, recumbente post se Camillo, filio fratris, qui duabus dignitatibus et ipse decursis pariter ornaveratur proconsulatum patris, patris consulum; Paeonius hinc propter atque hinc Athenius, homo litium temporumque varietatibus exercitatus. hunc sequebatur Gratianensis, omni ab infamia vir sequestrandus, qui Severinum sicut honore postibat, ita favore praecesserat. ultimus

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<sup>1</sup> Paeonius is so called as an agitator of the rabble. Cf. Lucan I. 268-271, IV. 799-801.

<sup>2</sup> One end of the dinner-table was left free for the convenience of the service; it is from this end that the "right" and "left" sides of the couch are reckoned. The usual form of dining-couch at this time was semicircular (*signa* or *stibadium*), being made to fit the round tables which had long been fashionable. The "horns" are the two ends of the couch. In the present case the guests are arranged in a way which seems to have been usual at the time. On the right extremity (or "horn") reclines Majorian, the host. Opposite him, on the left horn, is the guest of honour (the consul). The other guests are arranged round the couch in strict order of precedence, beginning with Magnus, next to the consul, and ending with Sidonius, who is next to Majorian. At the beginning of the conversation the Emperor was apparently expected to address the chief guest first and then say a word to each of the others in order of precedence.



## BOOK I. XI. TO MONTIUS

by one, but in a crowd and in a rush, offered me their lips and their hands. Only my good Curio<sup>1</sup> upbraided violently the disloyalty of the deserters, but as evening was coming on he was caught up by his sedan-bearers, who were more repulsive than undertakers' men, and so he was carried off to his house. 10. The next day Augustus invited me to take part in his banquet on the occasion of the sports of the circus. The first place on the left horn of the couch<sup>2</sup> was occupied by Severinus,<sup>3</sup> consul of the year, a man who through all the great struggles between the mighty and through all the unstable fortunes through which the state had passed had always kept a steady position of influence. At his side was Magnus,<sup>4</sup> who had formerly had the standing of an ex-prefect and had lately gained that of an ex-consul,<sup>5</sup> a personality equal to the double distinction conferred upon him. After him was placed Camillus,<sup>6</sup> his brother's son, who, having himself also passed through two high offices, had added fresh lustre alike to his father's proconsulship and to his uncle's consulship. Then next to him came Paconius, and then Athenius,<sup>7</sup> a man who had played a busy part in the vicissitudes of litigation and revolution. After him came Gratianensis,<sup>7</sup> a man whom no ill-report ought to touch, inferior to Severinus in rank but having the advantage of him in favour. Last came I, placed where

<sup>3</sup> Nothing further is known of Severinus.

<sup>4</sup> Magnus: n. on *Carm.* 23. 455.

<sup>5</sup> As already mentioned, Magnus had been consul in the previous year (460).

<sup>6</sup> Camillus: *Carm.* 9. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Not otherwise known.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

ego iacebam, qua purpurati latus laevum margine in dextro porrigebatur. 11. edulium multa parte finita Caesaris ad consulem sermo dirigitur, isque succinctus; inde devolvitur ad consularem; cum quo saepe repetitus, quia de litteris factus, ad virum inlustrem Camillum ex occasione transfertur, in tantum ut diceret princeps: "vere habes patrum, frater Camille, propter quem me familiae tuae consulatum unum gratuler contulisse." tunc ille, qui simile aliquid optaret, tempore invento: "non unum," inquit, "domine Auguste, sed primum." summo fragore, ut nec Augusti reverentia obsisteret, excepta sententia est. 12. inde nescio quid Athenium interrogans superiectum Paeonium compellatio Augusta praeteriit, casu an industria ignoro. quod cum turpiter Paeonius aegre tulisset, quod fuit turpius, compellato tacente respondit. subrisit Augustus, ut erat auctoritate servata, cum se communioni dedisset, ioci plenus, per quem cachinnum non minus obtigit Athenio vindictae, quam contigisset iniuriae. colligit itaque sese trebacissimus senex et, ut semper intrinsecus aestu pudoris excoquebatur, cur sibi Paeonius anteferreretur: "non miror," inquit, "Auguste, si mihi standi locum

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<sup>1</sup> This is Sidonius's way of saying that he was close to the emperor, who occupied the right "horn." The mention of the "left side" of the emperor has no significance, as every diner reclined on his left side (or elbow); it is due merely to the author's itch for antithesis; as "right" occurs in the sentence he cannot refrain from contrasting it with "left," just as he can scarcely ever mention "new" without contrasting it with "old," and *vice versa*.

## BOOK I. XI. TO MONTIUS

the left side of the wearer of the purple reposed on the right extremity of the couch.<sup>1</sup> 11. When we had got a good way through the courses, Caesar's conversation was directed to the consul, and was only short; then it passed to the consular, and with him it was frequently resumed, being on literary subjects; it was then shifted, when an occasion offered, to the Illustrious Camillus, to the extent that the Emperor remarked, "Truly, my dear Camillus, with such an uncle as you have I am delighted to have bestowed one consulship on your family." Then Camillus, who had similar ambitions for himself, found his opportunity, and said, "Not *one* consulship, my lord Augustus, but *the first*." This reply was received with a roar of applause, not hindered even by respect for Augustus. 12. Then Augustus in his round of remarks, by putting to Athenius some trifling question (whether deliberately or by accident I know not), passed over Paeonius, who was placed above him. Paeonius, with very bad taste, showed annoyance at this, and, what was worse, before the person addressed found words to reply, answered for him. Augustus gave a gentle laugh, being a man who, while keeping his dignity, was full of merriment when he had given himself over to good-fellowship; and by that chuckle Athenius won a revenge quite as great as the injury which he would otherwise have suffered. So this old gentleman, who was a decidedly artful person, pulled himself together, and found a vent for the blaze of shame which constantly burned within him as he thought how Paeonius was favoured above him. "I am not at all surprised, Augustus," said he, "that this fellow should attempt to rob me of my right to

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

praeripere conetur, qui tibi invadere non erubescit loquendi." 13. et vir illustis Gratianensis: "mutus," inquit, "hoc iurgio satiricis campus aperitur." hic imperator ad me cervice conversa: "audio," ait, "comes Sidoni, quod satiram scribas." "et ego," inquam, "hoc audio, domine princeps." tunc ille, sed ridens: "parce vel nobis." "at ego," inquam, "quod ab illicitis tempero, mihi parco." post quae ille: "et quid faciemus his," inquit, "qui te lacesunt?" et ego: "quisquis est iste, domine imperator, publice accuset: si redarguimur, debita luamus supplicia convicti; ceterum obiecta si non improbabiliter cassaverimus, oro ut indultu clementiae tuae praeter iuris iniuriam in accusatorem meum quae volo scribam." 14. ad haec ipse Paeonium conspicatus nutu coepit consulere nutantem, placeatne condicio. sed cum ille confusus reticuisset princepsque consuleret erubescenti, ait: "annuo postulatis, si hoc ipsum e vestigio versibus petas." "fiat," inquam; retrorsumque conversus, tamquam aquam manibus poscerem, tantumque remoratus, quantum stibadii circulum celerantia ministeria percurrunt, cubitum toro reddidi. et imperator: "spoponderas te licentiam scribendae satirae versibus subitis postulaturum." et ego:

"scribere me satiram qui culpat, maxime princeps, hanc rogo decernas aut probet aut timeat."

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<sup>1</sup> In the case of Sidonius this title is commonly thought to have been purely honorary, not due to the holding of any public office. The view of Savaron that he was *comes civitatis Arvernorum* has recently been revived, but has no evidence to support it; and the existence of an official with this title in the reign of Majorian would certainly be surprising.

## BOOK I. XI. TO MONTIUS

precedence,\* when he does not blush to usurp your right to speak." 13. Then said the Illustrious Gratianensis, "This wrangle opens a wide door for satirists." Thereupon the Emperor turned his head to me and said, "I hear, Count<sup>1</sup> Sidonius, that you write satire." I replied, "Sovereign Lord, I hear it too." Then he said, but with a smile, "Anyhow, spare poor me." I said, "In keeping off forbidden ground it is myself that I spare." "And what," he said, "shall we do with those who attack you?" I replied, "Whoever does so, my Lord Emperor, ought to accuse me openly; if I am found guilty, let me pay the proper penalty as a proved offender; if, on the other hand, I can make out a good case against the charge, I beg that by the indulgence of your gracious clemency I may be allowed to write what I please against my accuser, short of offending the law." 14. At this he looked Paeonius in the face and by a nod propounded to the confounded courtier the question whether he approved of the terms. When the abashed Paeonius said nothing, the Prince showed consideration for his blushes and said, "I approve the proposal, on condition that you make the request on the spot in verse." "Very good," I said; then I turned round as if asking for water for my hands, and after waiting just the time that the hurrying servants take to make the round of the couch, I again reposed my arm on the cushion. Then the Emperor said, "You undertook to ask in impromptu verse for permission to write a satire." I said:

"Who taxes me with satire—mighty prince,  
Say he must prove it or be made to wince."

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

15. "secutus est fragor, nisi quod dico iactantia est, par Camillano, quem quidem non tam carminis dignitas quam temporis brevitās meruit. et princeps: "deum testor et statum publicum me de cetero numquam prohibiturum quin quae velis scribas, quippe cum tibi crimen impactum probari nullo modo possit; simul et periniurium est sententiam purpurati tribuere privatis hoc simultatibus. ut innocens ac segura nobilitas propter odia certa crimine incerto periclitetur." ad hanc ipse sententiam cum verecunde capite demisso gratias agerem, contionatoris mei coeperunt ora pallere, in quae paulo ante post iram tristitia successerat; nec satis defuit quin gelarent tamquam ad exsertum praebere cervices iussa mucronem. 16. vix post haec alia pauca: surreximus. paululum ab aspectu imperatoris processeramus atque etiamnunc chlamydibus induebamur, cum mihi consul ad pectus, praefectorii ad manus cadere, ipse ille reus amicus crebro et abiecte miserantibus cunctis humiliari, ita ut timerem ne mihi invidiam supplicando moveret, quam criminando non concitaverat. dixi ad extremum pressus oratu procerum conglobatorum, sciret conatibus suis versu nil reponendum, derogare actibus meis in posterum tamen si pepercisset;

## BOOK I. XI. TO MONTIUS

15. At once there was an outburst of applause (if it is not boasting to say so) like that which followed the sally of Camillus; however, it was earned not so much by the quality of the verse as by its quick production. Then the Prince said, "I declare before God and the State that for the future I will never forbid your writing anything that you please, for the charge that has been fastened upon you can in no way be substantiated. Moreover, it would be an outrageous thing if the authority of the wearer of the purple should so favour private animosities as to endanger an inoffensive and unsuspecting nobleman by a doubtful charge prompted by undoubted ill-will." At this utterance I modestly bowed my head and expressed my thanks, and the face of my demagogue, in which gloom had so recently taken the place of anger, began to pale; indeed it almost froze, as if the order had been given him to stretch out his neck to the drawn sword of the executioner. 16. After this there was very little further conversation; then we rose. We had only proceeded a little way from the Emperor's presence, and we were just putting on our cloaks, when the consul flung himself on my breast and the ex-prefects grasped my hands, while my friend the offender, of all people, abased himself before me again and again, rousing the whole company to compassion, so that I was afraid that by his humiliation he might stir up against me the ill-will which he had failed to excite by his accusation. In the end, urged by a massed appeal from the dignitaries present, I told him that he might be sure that no revenge in verse would be taken for his machinations, always provided that in the future he did not vilify my actions; for

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

etenim sufficere debere, quod satirae obiectio famam mihi parasset, sed sibi infamiam. 17. in summa, perculi<sup>1</sup> quidem, domine maior, non assertorem calumniae tantum quantum murmuratorem; sed cum mihi sic satisfactum est ut pectori meo pro reatu eius tot potestatum dignitatumque culmina et iura summitterentur, fateor exordium contumeliae talis tanti fuisse, cui finis gloria fuit. vale.

### LIBER SECVNDVS

#### I

#### SIDONIVS ECDICIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Duo nunc pariter mala sustinent Arverni tui. "quaenam?" inquis. praesentiam Seronati et absentiam tuam. Seronati, inquam: de cuius ut primum etiam nomine loquar, sic mihi videtur quasi praescia futurorum luisse fortuna, sicuti ex adverso maiores nostri proelia, quibus nihil est foedius, bella dixerunt; quique etiam pari contrarietate fata, quia non parcerent, Parcas vocitavere.

<sup>1</sup> perculi *Wilamowitz*: pertuli.

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\* For Ecdicius see *Introd.*, pp. xlvi ff.

<sup>1</sup> Seronatus is generally said to have been Praetorian Prefect of Gaul, but it is quite possible that he was either Vicarius of the Seven Provinces (see p. 347, n. 2) or governor of



## BOOK II. 1. TO ECDICIUS

there was good reason. as I told him, for me to be content, inasmuch as his charge of satire-writing had brought me repute, and him disrepute. 17. The upshot of it all is, my honoured lord, that I crushed one who had whispered rather than proclaimed a false accusation against me; but now that I have got such ample satisfaction, having had all those high and mighty dignitaries bowing their majesty and authority before me because of his guilt, I must confess that the insult which formed the preamble was worth while, seeing that the conclusion has been glory. Farewell.

## BOOK II

### I

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS DEAR ECDICIUS, GREETING \*

1. Your countrymen the Arverni have now to bear two troubles at once. "What can they be?" you ask. Seronatus's<sup>1</sup> presence and your absence. Seronatus's, I say, whose very name, I may remark at the outset, makes me feel that chance, foreseeing the future, must have played a joke, just as our ancestors, going by contraries, called wars, which are the foulest of all things, *bella* ("beautiful"), and with like contradiction called the Fates *Parcae*, because

the province of Aquitanica Prima (perhaps in A.D. 469). He was in league with Euric, and tried to deliver the Roman territories into the hands of the Goths, until he was brought to justice by the Arvernians (VII. 7. 2). See also V. 13.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

rediit ipse Catilina saeculi nostri nuper Aturribus, ut sanguinem fortunasque miserorum, quas ibi ex parte propinaverat, hic ex asse misceret. 2. scitote in eo per dies spiritum diu dissimulati furoris aperiri: aperte invidet, abiecte fingit, serviliter superbit, indicit ut dominus, exigit ut tyrannus, addicit ut iudex, calumpniatur ut barbarus; toto die a metu armatus, ab avaritia ieiunus, a cupiditate terribilis, a vanitate crudelis non cessat simul furta vel punire vel facere; palam et ridentibus convocatis ructat inter cives pugnas, inter barbaros litteras; epistulas, ne primis quidem apicibus sufficienter initiatus, publice a iactantia dictat, ab impudentia emendat; 3. totum quod concupiscit quasi comparat nec dat pretia contemnens nec accipit instrumenta desperans; in concilio iubet in consilio tacet, in ecclesia iocatur in convivio praedicat, in cubiculo damnat in quaestione dormitat; implet cotidie silvas fugientibus villas hospitibus,<sup>1</sup> altaria reis carceres clericis;

<sup>1</sup> hostibus *LC*.

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<sup>1</sup> Whether the form *Aturribus* is correct or not, the reference is to the town of the Aturenses (*Civitas Aturensium*, modern Aire, in Gascony). It was in Novempopulana, which now belonged to the Goths, and the Gothic court occasionally resided there.

<sup>2</sup> The reference seems to be to *instrumenta emptionis* (see Justinian, *Inst.* III. 23. 1), written contracts between vendor and intending purchaser.

<sup>3</sup> The Concilium Septem Provinciarum (Introd., p. xii).

<sup>4</sup> Referring to the usual system of occupation by the Goths and others, whereby the Roman landowner had to surrender a certain portion of his estate to a "barbarian." See Introd., p. x, n. 2. The word *hospes* was euphemistically applied

## BOOK II. I. TO ECDICIUS

they spared not. This very Catiline of our age returned lately from Aire<sup>1</sup> to make here one big draught of the blood and the fortunes of the wretched inhabitants, after a good taste of such refreshment in the other place. 2. Be it known to all of you that in his case a long-concealed spirit of brutality is being revealed more fully every day. He is openly malignant and basely deceitful; he swaggers like a slave and gives his orders like a master; exacts like a despot, condemns like a judge, accuses falsely like a barbarian; all day long he goes armed through fear and he goes hungry through avarice; his greed makes him terrible, his presumption makes him cruel; he is ceaselessly busy either in punishing thefts or in committing them; in public and amidst the laughter of those he has assembled he belches forth talk of fighting amongst peaceful citizens and of letters amongst barbarians: as for his written instructions, not having had a real schooling even in his ABC, he dictates them in public through boastfulness and corrects them through sheer effrontery. 3. Everything that he lusts to possess he makes a pretence of purchasing; he is too arrogant to pay the price and too diffident to agree to a contract of sale.<sup>2</sup> In the Common Council<sup>3</sup> he gives orders, among his counsellors he is mute; in the church he jests, at the banquet he preaches; in his chamber he convicts, in the court he dozes; each day he crowds the woods with fugitives, the farms with barbarian occupants,<sup>4</sup> the altars with accused persons, the prisons with priests; he brags to the

both to the owner and to his unwelcome "guest." The meaning is that Seronatus allows the Goths to encroach freely on Roman territory.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

exsultans Gothis insultansque Romanis, inludens praefectis conludensque numerariis, leges Theudo-  
sianas calcans Theudoricianasque proponens veteres  
culpas, nova tributa perquirat. 4. proinde moras  
tuas citus explica et quidquid illud est quod te retentat  
incide. te exspectat palpitantium civium extrema  
libertas. quidquid sperandum, quidquid desper-  
andum est, fieri te medio, te praesule placet. si  
nullae a republica vires, nulla praesidia, si nullae,  
quantum rumor est, Anthemii principis opes, statuit  
te auctore nobilitas seu patriam dimittere seu  
capillos. vale.

### II

#### SIDONIUS DOMITIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Ruri me esse causaris, cum mihi potius queri  
suppetat te nunc urbe retineri. iam ver decedit  
aestati et per lineas sol altatus extremas in axem  
Scythicum radio peregrinante porrigitur. hic quid  
de regionis nostrae climate loquar? cuius spatia

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. assume the tonsure.

\* On Domitius see *Carm.* 24. 10 n. Some of the "fine writing" in this letter is rather obscure, and the description does not supply adequate material for a plausible plan of the buildings. For the baths of Avitacum see *Carm.* 18. There have been several attempts to identify the site of the "villa." The favourite theory places it on the shores of the Lac d'Aydat, about 12 miles S.W. of Clermont-Ferrand. The very name of Aydat (Aidacum in mediaeval documents) seems to confirm the identification, and in the village church there is a mysterious

## BOOK II. II. TO DOMITIUS

Goths and insults the Romans, mocks the magistrates and plays tricks along with the public cashiers; he tramples on the laws of Theodosius and issues laws of Theodoric, searching out ancient offences and brand-new taxes. 4. Be quick then and clear away your impediments and break off whatever is detaining you. Your countrymen in the last throes of the struggle for liberty are waiting for you. Every counsel of hope or of despair we are prepared to risk with you in our midst, with you as our leader. If the state has neither strength nor soldiers, if (as report has it) the Emperor Anthemius has no resources, then our nobility has resolved under your guidance to give up either its country or its hair.<sup>1</sup> Farewell.

### II

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND DOMITIUS, GREETING \*

1. You grumble at my staying in the country, whereas I have better reason to complain of your being detained in town. Spring is now giving place to summer, and the sun, travelling upward through its highest latitudes, is obtruding an alien ray upon the region of the North Pole. No need to speak here of the climate of this district. The

inscription, possibly of the 12th century, but now thought to be a copy of a much older one: HIC ST (= *sunt*) DVO INNOCENTES ET S (= *sanctus*) SIDONIVS. But it is not very easy to accept this tempting identification, even if we make allowance for considerable changes in the physical features of the district. The question is discussed at length by Stevens, Appendix B, pp. 185-195, with the aid of a map, a plan, and an aerial photograph.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

divinum sic tetendit opificium ut magis vaporibus orbis occidui subiceremur. quid plura? mundus incanduit: glacies Alpina deletur et hiuleis arentium rimarum flexibus terra perscribitur; squallet glareas in vadis, limus in ripis, pulvis in campis; aqua ipsa quaecumque perpetuo labens tractu cunctante languescit; iam non solum calet unda sed coquitur. 2. et nunc,\* dum in carbaso sudat unus, alter in bombyce, tu endromidatus exterius, intrinsecus fasceatus, insuper et concava municipis Amerini sede compressus discipulis non aestu minus quam timore pallentibus exponere oscitabundus ordiris: "Samia mihi mater fuit." quin tu mage, si quid tibi salubre cordi, raptim subduceris anhelantibus angustiis civitatis et contubernio nostro avertere insertus fallis clementissimo recessu inclementiam canicularum? 3. sane si placitum, quis sit agri in quem vocaris situs accipe. Avitaci sumus: nomen hoc praedio, quod, quia uxorium, patrio mihi dulcius: haec mihi cum meis praesule deo, nisi quid tu fascinum verere, concordia. mons ab occasu, quamquam terrenus, arduus tamen inferiores sibi colles tamquam gemino fomite effundit, quattuor a se circiter iugerum

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<sup>1</sup> i.e. of withies, for which Ameria was famous. This expression has been ludicrously misunderstood; Domitius has actually been represented as "teaching in the schools of Ameria"! See Housman in *Class. Rev.* XIV (1900), p. 54.

<sup>2</sup> Terence, *Eunuchus*, 107.

<sup>3</sup> Settlements of considerable size, consisting largely of tenant-farmers, slaves, and other persons attached in various ways to the estate or to its owner, grew up in the neighbourhood of important "villas." Thus *Avitacum* is here treated grammatically as a township, and used in the locative case.

<sup>4</sup> i.e. not rocky.

## BOOK II. II. TO DOMITIUS

divine workmanship has so fixed its borders that we are chiefly exposed to the heats of the west. Why say more? The earth has grown hot; the ice of the Alps is disappearing; the land is being scored with irregular curved cracks gaping in the heat; gravel lies untidily in the fords, mud on the banks, dust in the fields; even streams that flow all the year round have languidly slowed down; the water is not merely hot, it boils. 2. And at this time of year, while one man sweats in linen and another in silk, you with your woollen gown outside and your swathings underneath, and, as if that were not enough, squeezed into a deep chair made of America's population,<sup>1</sup> begin yawningly to expound to your pupils, whose pale faces are due quite as much to the heat as to fear of you: "A Samian was my mother."<sup>2</sup> Why not rather, if you have any thought of your health, promptly withdraw from the panting oppression of the town and eagerly join our house-party, and so beguile the fierceness of the dog-days by retiring to the coolest of retreats? 3. Just let me tell you, if you don't mind, how this country place you are invited to is situated. We are at Avitacum;<sup>3</sup> this is the name of the farm, which is dearer to me than the property I inherited from my father, because it came to me with my wife: such is the harmony in which, under God's guidance, I live with my family (I hope you are not afraid of the evil eye!). On the western side is a mountain, earthy in substance<sup>4</sup> but stiff to climb, which pushes out lower hills from itself like offshoots from a double stem; and these hills diverge so as to leave a breadth of about four *iugera*<sup>5</sup> between

<sup>5</sup> The *iugerum* was about five-eighths of an acre.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

latitudine abductos. sed donec domicilio competens vestibuli campus aperitur, mediam vallem rectis tractibus prosequuntur latera clivorum usque in marginem villae, quae in Borean Austrumque conversis frontibus tenditur. 4. balineum ab Africo radicibus nemorosae rupis adhaerescit, et si caedua per iugum silva truncetur, in ora fornacis lapsu velut spontaneo deciduis struibus impingitur. hinc aquarum surgit cella coctilium, quae consequenti unguentariae spatii parilitate conquadrat excepto solii capacis hemicyclio, ubi et vis undae ferventis per parietem foraminatum flexilis plumbi meatibus implicita singultat. intra conclave succensum solidus dies et haec abundantia lucis inclusae ut verecundos quosque compellat aliquid se plus putare quam nudos. 5. hinc frigidaria dilatatur, quae piscinas publicis operibus exstructas non impudenter aemularetur. primum tecti apice in conum cacuminato, cum ab angulis quadrifariam concurrentia dorsa cristarum tegulis interiacentibus imbricarentur (ipsa vero convenientibus mensuris exactissima spatiositate quadratur, ita ut ministeriorum sese non impediende famulatu tot possit recipere sellas quot solet sigma personas), fenestras e regione conditor binas confinio camerae pendentis admovit, ut suspicientum visui fabrefactum lacunar aperiret. interior parietum



## BOOK II. II. TO DOMITIUS

them. But before spreading out so as to allow a sufficiently large frontage for a dwelling, the hill-sides escort the intervening valley in straight lines; right up to the outskirts of the mansion, which has its fronts facing north and south. 4. On the south-west side are the baths, hugging the base of a wooded cliff, and when along the ridge the branches of light wood are lopped, they slide almost of themselves in falling heaps into the mouth of the furnace. At this point there stands the hot bath, and this is of the same size as the anointing-room which adjoins it, except that it has a semicircular end with a roomy bathing-tub, in which part a supply of hot water meanders sobbingly through a labyrinth of leaden pipes that pierce the wall. Within the heated chamber there is full day and such an abundance of enclosed light as forces all modest persons to feel themselves something more than naked. 5. Next to this the cold room spreads out; it might without impertinence challenge comparison with baths built as public undertakings. First of all the architect has given it a peaked roof of conical shape; the four faces of this erection are covered at the corners where they join by hollow tiles, between which rows of flat tiles are set, and the bath-chamber itself has its area perfectly adjusted by the nicest measurements so as to find room for as many chairs as the semicircular bath usually admits bathers, without causing the servants to get in one another's way. The architect has also set a pair of windows, one opposite the other, where the vaulting joins the wall, so as to disclose to the view of guests as they look up the cunningly-wrought coffered ceiling. The inner face of the walls is content with the plain

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

facies solo levigati caementi candore contenta est. 6. non hic per nudam pictorum corporum pulchritudinem turpis prostat historia, quae sicut ornat artem, sic devenustat artificem. absunt ridiculi vestitu et vultibus histriones pigmentis multicoloribus Philistionis suppellectilem mentientes. absunt lubrici tortuosique pugilatu et nexibus palaestritae, quorum etiam viventum luctas, si involvantur obscenius, casta confestim gymnasiarchorum virga dissolvit. 7. quid plura? nihil illis paginis impressum reperietur quod non vidisse sit sanctius. pauci tamen versiculi lectorem adventicium remorabuntur minime improbo temperamento, quia eos nec relegisse desiderio est nec perlegisse fastidio. iam si marmora inquiras, non illic quidem Paros Carystos Proconnesos, Phryges Numidae Spartiatæ rupium variatarum posuere crustas, neque per scopulos Aethiopicos et abrupta purpurea genuino fucata conchylio sparsum mihi saxa furfurem mentiuntur. sed etsi nullo peregrinarum cautium rigore ditamur, habent tamen tuguria seu mapalia mea civicum frigus. quin potius quid habeamus quam quid non habeamus ausculta. 8. huic basilicae appendix piscina forinsecus seu, si graecari mavis, baptisterium ab oriente conectitur, quod viginti circiter modiorum milia capit. huc elutis e calore venientibus triplex medii parietis aditus per arcuata intervalla

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<sup>1</sup> A writer of mimes in Greek, who had a considerable vogue in Rome in the age of Augustus.

<sup>2</sup> See *Carm.* 5. 34-36 n. *Lapis Syenites* was a coarse stone, sprinkled with numerous reddish crystals.

<sup>3</sup> A *modius* was approximately two gallons.

## BOOK II. II. TO DOMITIUS

whiteness of polished concrete. 6. Here no disgraceful tale is exposed by the nude beauty of painted figures, for though such a tale may be a glory to art it dishonours the artist. There are no mummers absurd in features and dress counterfeiting Philistion's<sup>1</sup> outfit in paints of many colours. There are no athletes slipping and twisting in their blows and grips. Why, even in real life the chaste rod of the gymnasiarch promptly breaks off the bouts of such people if they get mixed up in an unseemly way! 7. In short, there will not be found traced on those spaces anything which it would be more proper not to look at; only a few lines of verse will cause the new-comer to stop and read: these strike the happy mean, for although they inspire no longing to read them again, they can be read through without boredom. If you ask what I have to show in the way of marble, it is true that Paros, Carystos and Proconnesos, Phrygians, Numidians and Spartans have not deposited here slabs from hill-faces in many colours, nor do any stone surfaces, stained with a natural tinge among the Ethiopian crags with their purple precipices, furnish a counterfeit imitation of sprinkled bran.<sup>2</sup> But although I am not enriched by the chill starkness of foreign rocks, still my buildings—call them cottages or huts as you please—have their native coolness. However, I want you to hear what we have rather than what we have not. 8. Attached to this hall is an external appendage on the east side, a *piscina* (swimming-pool), or, if you prefer the Greek word, a *baptisterium*, which holds about 20,000 *modii*.<sup>3</sup> Those who come out of the heat after the bath find a triple entrance thrown open to them in

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reseratur. nec pilae sunt mediae sed columnae, quas architecti peritiores aedificiorum purpurās fūcupavere. in hanc ergo piscinam fluvium de supercilio montis elicited canalibusque circumactis per exteriora natatoriae latera curvatum sex fistulae prominentes leonum simulatis capitibus effundunt, quae temere ingressis veras dentium crates, meros oculorum furores, certas cervicum iubas imaginantur. 9. hic si dominum seu domestica seu hospitalis turba circumstet, quia prae strepitu caduci fluminis mutuae vocum vices minus intelliguntur, in aurem sibi populus confabulatur; ita sonitu pressus alieno ridiculum adfectat publicus sermo secretum. hinc egressis frons triclinii matronalis offertur, cui continuatur vicinante textrino cella penaria discriminata tantum pariete castrensi. 10. ab ortu lacum porticus intuetur, magis rotundatis tulta coluriis<sup>1</sup> quam columnis invidiosa monobilibus. a parte vestibuli longitudo tecta intrinsecus patet mediis non interpellata parietibus, quae, quia nihil ipsa prospectat, etsi non hypodromus, saltim cryptoporticus meo mihi iure vocitabitur. haec tamen

<sup>1</sup> coluriis *Sirmond*: collyriis.

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<sup>1</sup> It seems almost certain that *purpurae* means columns of porphyry (*purpureus lapis*, Lucan X. 116). *Columnae* are cylindrical, *pilae* may be pilasters or half-cylindrical pillars. These two words are contrasted by Seneca (*N.Q.* VI. 20. 6) and Petronius (c. 79), and twice in the scholia on Horace, *Sat.* I. 4. 71. *Mediae* is difficult. I take it to mean that only the middle one of the three entrances had "purple" columns.

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the centre of the wall, with separate archways. The middle supports are not pillars but columns, of the kind that high-class architects have called "purples."<sup>1</sup> A stream is "enticed from the brow"<sup>2</sup> of the mountain, and diverted through conduits which are carried round the outer sides of the swimming-bath; it pours its waters into the pool from six projecting pipes with representations of lions' heads: to those who enter unprepared they will give the impression of real rows of teeth, genuine wildness in the eyes and unmistakable manes upon the neck.

9. If the owner is surrounded here by a crowd of his own people or of visitors, so difficult is it to exchange words intelligibly, owing to the roar of the falling stream, that the company talk right into each other's ears; and so a perfectly open conversation, overpowered by this din from without, takes on an absurd air of secrecy. On leaving this place one comes across the front of the ladies' dining-room; joined on to this, with only a barrack partition<sup>3</sup> between them, is the household store-room, next to which is the weaving-room.

10. On the east a portico overlooks the lake; it is supported on round composite pillars rather than by a pretentious array of monolithic columns. On the side of the vestibule extends inward a length of covered passage—covered but open, being unbroken by partitions; this corridor has no view of its own, so, although it cannot claim to be a hypodrome,<sup>4</sup> at any rate I am entitled to call it a crypt-portico. At the end of

<sup>1</sup> Verg. *Georg.* I. 108 sq.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably a flimsy partition, or one which does not extend all the way from floor to roof; but the expression does not seem to be found elsewhere.

<sup>4</sup> Underground passage.

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aliquid spatio suo in extimo deambulacri capite defrudans efficit membrum bene frigidum, ubi publico lectisternio exstructo clientularum sive nutricum loquacissimus chorus receptui canit cum ego meique dormitorium cubiculum petierimus. 11. a cryptoporticu in hiemale triclinium venit, quod arcuatili camino saepe ignis animatus pulla fuligine infequit. sed quid haec tibi, quem nunc ad focum minime invito? quin potius ad te tempusque pertinentia loquar. ex hoc triclinio fit in diaetam sive cenatiunculam transitus, cui fere totus lacus quaeque tota lacui patet. in hac stibadium et nitens abacus, in quorum aream sive suggestum a subiecta porticu sensim non<sup>1</sup> breviatis angustisque gradibus ascenditur. quo loci recumbens, si quid inter edendum vacas, prospiciendi voluptatibus occuparis. 12. iam si tibi ex illo conclamatissimo fontium decocta referatur, videbis in calicibus repente perfusis nivalium maculas et frusta nebularum et illam lucem lubricam poculorum quadam quasi pinguedine subiti alioris hebetatam. tum respondentibus poculis potiones, quarum rigentes cyathi siticuloso cuique, ne dicam tibi granditer abstemio,

<sup>1</sup> non om. LVM<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> A *lectisternium publicum* was a sacred feast to appease the gods, at which their images were placed on couches with food set before them. Sidonius playfully uses this expression of the midday meal of female slaves and dependents, with a glance at the literal meaning of *lectisternium*, "spreading of a (dining-) couch," combined with the other meaning of *publicum*, "general"; one might say in English "a general spread." In those troublous times many humble or distressed people put themselves under the protection of the great landowners; the wives or daughters of such men, and possibly those of some

## BOOK II. II. TO DOMITIUS

this passage, however, a part is stolen from it to form a very cool chamber, where a chattering crowd of female dependents and nursemaids spread a feast for the gods,<sup>1</sup> but sound the retreat when I and my family have set out for our bedrooms.<sup>2</sup>

11. From the crypt-portico we come to the winter dining-room, which the fire often called into life within the vaulted fireplace has stained with black soot. But why should I speak of this to you, when the last thing in my mind at this time is to bid you to the fireside? Rather let me speak of what better suits you and the time of year. From this dining-room we pass to a living-room or small dining-room, all of which lies open to the lake and to which almost the whole lake lies open. In this room are a semicircular dining-couch and a glittering sideboard, and on to the floor or platform on which they stand there is a gentle ascent from the portico by steps which are not made either short or narrow. Reclining in this place, you are engrossed by the pleasures of the view whenever you are not busy with the meal. 12. Then if a chilled drink is brought you from that most celebrated of springs, you will see in the cups, when they are suddenly filled to the brim, spots and crumbs of snowy mist, and the glossy glitter which cups have is dimmed by the greasy-looking film produced by sudden cold. Then there are the drinks that are suited to the cups, icy ladlefuls of them, which might be dreaded by the most thirsty of men, to say nothing of you, who are supremely abstemious. From this place

*coloni* (tenant-farmers) and other workers on the estate, might be included under the term *clientulae*.

<sup>2</sup> i.e. for the siesta.

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metuerentur. hinc iam spectabis ut promoveat alnum piscator in pelagus, ut stataria retia suberinis corticibus extendat aut sigris per certa intervalla dispositis tractus funium librentur hamati, scilicet ut nocturnis per lacum excursibus rapacissimi salares in consanguineas agantur insidias: quid enim hinc congruentius dixerim, cum piscis pisce decipitur? 13. edulibus terminatis excipiet te deversorium, quia minime aestuosum, maxime aestivum; nam per hoc, quod in Aquilonem solum patescit, habet diem, non habet solem, interiecto consistorio perangusto, ubi somnulentiae cubiculariorum dormitandi potius quam dormiendi locus est. 14. hic iam quam volupe auribus insonare cicadas meridie concrepantes, ranas crepusculo incumbente blaterantes, cygnos atque anseres concubia nocte clangentes, intempesta gallos gallinacios concinentes, oscines corvos voce triplicata puniceam surgentis Aurorae facem consalutantes, diluculo autem Philomelam inter frutices sibilantem, Prognen inter asseres minurrientem! cui concentui licebit adiungas fistulae septiforis armentalem Camenam, quam saepe nocturnis carminum certaminibus insomnes nostrorum montium Tityri exercent, inter greges tinnibulatos per depasta buceta reboantes. quae tamen varia vocum cantuumque modulamina profundius confovendo sopori tuo lenocinabuntur. 15. porticibus egresso, si portum litoris petas, in area virenti



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you will see how the fisherman propels his boat into the deep water, how he spreads his stationary nets on cork floats, and how lengths of rope with hooks, attached are poised there, with marks arranged at regular intervals, so that the greedy trout, in their nightly forays through the lake, may be lured to kindred bait: for what more suitable phrase could I find in this case, when fish is caught by fish? 13. When you have finished your meal, a drawing-room will offer you welcome, one which is truly a summer room because it is not in the least sun-baked, for, as it is open to the north only, it admits daylight but not sunshine; before you reach it there is a narrow ante-chamber, where the somnolence of the ushers has room to doze rather than to sleep. 14. How charming it is here to have echoing in one's ears the midday chirp of cicadas, the croaking of the frogs as evening comes on, the honking of swans and geese in the early hours of slumber, the crowing of cocks in the small hours; to hear the prophetic rooks greeting with thrice-repeated cry the red torch of rising dawn, Philomela piping in the bushes in the half-light, and Procne twittering amid the rafters! To this concert you may add if you please the pastoral muse with seven-holed flute, which often many a Tityrus of our mountains, forgoing sleep, keeps sounding in a nocturnal competition of song, among the belled sheep whose cries echo through the pastures as they crop the grass. Yet all these changeful tones of music and cries will but fondle and coax your slumber and make it all the deeper. 15. Issuing from the shelter of the colonnades, if you make for the lakeside harbour, you find your-

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vulgare iubar,<sup>1</sup> quamquam non procul nemus :  
ingentes tiliae duae conexis frondibus, fomitibus  
abiunctis unam umbram non una radice conficiunt.  
in cuius opacitate, cum me meus Ecdicius inlustrat,  
pilae vacamus, sed hoc eo usque, donec arborum  
imago contractior intra spatium ramorum recussa  
cohibeatur atque illic aleatorium lassis consumpto  
sphaeristerio faciat. 16. sed quia tibi, sicut aedi-  
ficiū solvi, sic lacum debeo, quod restat agnosce.  
lacus in Eurum defluus meat, eiusque harenis  
fundamenta impressa domicilii ventis motantibus  
aestuans umectat alluvio. is quidem sane circa  
principia sui solo palustri voraginosus et vestigio  
inspectoris inadibilis : ita limi bibuli pinguedo  
coalescit ambientibus sese fontibus algidis, litoribus  
algoris. attamen pelagi mobilis campus cumbulis  
late secatur pervagabilibus, si flabra posuere ; si  
turbo austrinus insorduit, immane turgescit, ita ut  
arborum comis quae margini insistent superiectae  
asperginis fragor impluat. 17. ipse autem se-  
cundum mensuras quas ferunt nauticas in decem  
et septem stadia procedit, fluvio intratus, qui

<sup>1</sup> iubar *add. ego.*

<sup>1</sup> Lucan V. 220, where darkness shuts off from the Delphic prophetess the vision she has just had, and she emerges from it into the ordinary daylight : *refertur ad vulgare iubar.* In the present passage I have inserted *iubar*, which might easily have dropped out after *vulgare*. If the reading in the text be not adopted, it seems best to read *egressus* for *egresso* and to take *vulgare* as a verb : "you are made public," i.e. "you are exposed to view"; but the meanings of this verb when applied to persons do not favour such a use, even in jest. Sidonius has several references to and reminiscences of Lucan, and quotes him in I. 11. 7, above.

<sup>2</sup> There is a play on words here; the lustre shed by the

## BOOK II. II. TO DOMITIUS

self exposed to "the light of common day"<sup>1</sup> on a stretch of green; but there is a wooded patch not far off, where two enormous limes link the foliage of their separate stocks to produce a single shade from a twofold root. In that dark shelter, when my dear Ecdicius sheds his lustre upon me,<sup>2</sup> we find recreation at ball, but only until the diminishing shadow of the trees is driven backward and confined within the range of the branches<sup>3</sup> and makes there a dicing-space for people tired after their ball-game. 16. Now that I have duly presented the building to you I must still give you the lake; so listen to what remains. The lake flows downwards towards the east, and its wash, which surges as the wind drives it, moistens the foundations of the house, which are sunk in its sandy bottom. At its beginning it has an expanse of marshy soil with deep pools, and no would-be sight-seer can get near, thanks to the greasy mixture of oozing slime amid an intertwining labyrinth of cold streams and weed-grown banks. But the moving plain of open water is cut in all directions by small boats flitting about everywhere, if the wind has fallen; but if a gale from the south brings dirty weather, it forms stupendous waves, so that the breaking of the overcast spray comes down like rain on the foliage of the trees which stand on the bank. 17. The lake itself, according to what is called nautical measurement, has a length of seventeen stadia,<sup>4</sup> and is entered by a stream which is glorious Ecdicius is contrasted with the dark shade (*opacitas*) of the woodland.

<sup>3</sup> *i.e.* until the sun is overhead.

<sup>4</sup> The stadium, a Greek measure, was used by the Romans for nautical and astronomical measurements. Seventeen stadia would be equal to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  Roman miles, *i.e.* almost exactly two English miles.

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salebratim saxorum obicibus adfractus spumoso canescit impulsu et nec longum scopulis præcipitibus exemptus lacu conditur; quem fors fuit an incurrat an faciat, præterit certe, coactus per cola subterranea deliquari, non ut fluctibus, sed ut piscibus pauperetur;<sup>1</sup> qui repulsi in gurgitem pigriorem carnes rubras albis abdominibus extendunt: ita illis nec redire valentibus nec exire permissis quendam vivum et circumlaticium carcerem corpulentia facit. 18. lacus ipse, qua dexter, incisus flexuosus nemorosusque, qua laevus, patens herbosus aequalis. aequor ab Africo viride per litus, quia in undam fronde porrecta ut glareas aqua, sic aquas umbra perfundit. huiusmodi colorem ab oriente par silvarum corona continuat. per Arctoum latus ut pelago natura, sic species. a Zephyro plebeius et tumultuarius frutex frequenterque lemborum superlabentum ponderibus inflexus; hunc circa lubrici scirporum cirri plicantur simulque pingues ulvarum paginae natant salicumque glaucarum fota

<sup>1</sup> pauperetur ego : pauperaretur.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a literal translation. The drains are likened to sieves or strainers because the apertures are covered by some kind of fine network or grating through which the water can filter but the fishes cannot pass. Apparently there was at this end of the lake a creek or inlet, which, since the current flowed in that direction, Sidonius regards as a continuation of the stream which flows into the lake at the other end. At the far end of this inlet there are drains to carry off the surplus water. The fishes are carried by the current into the inlet; they cannot get into the drains, and, of course, there is a bank or dam to stop further progress. Here the water which does not vanish through the drains is in constant commotion, hurled back and whirling round, and the fishes are carried round with it till they get back to the less agitated water, where they congregate like salmon at the bottom of a salmon-leap and grow fat and

## BOOK II. II. TO DOMITIUS

roughly broken by rocky barriers and so whitens with splashes of foam, and presently frees itself from the steep rocks and buries itself in the lake. Whether it so happens that this river creates the lake or merely that it runs into it, it certainly passes beyond it, being strained through subterranean sieves,<sup>1</sup> with the result that it undergoes a deprivation, not of its waters but of its fish. These are thrown back into the more sluggish water, where they increase the bulk of red flesh in their white bellies;<sup>2</sup> and so it goes on: they are not able to make their way back or to find a way out, and their obesity creates for them what one may call a living circulatory prison. 18. As for the lake itself, on its right bank it is indented, winding and wooded; on the left, open, grassy and even. On the south-west the water is green along the shore, because the foliage stretches over the water, and just as the water floods the gravel, so the shade floods the water. On the east a like fringe of trees spreads a tint of the same kind. On the northern side the water presents its natural appearance. On the west is a vulgar and disorderly growth of weeds, which is often bent under the weight of the yachts that speed over it; round this growth slippery tufts of bulrushes wrap themselves; thick slabs of sedge also float there, and the bitter sap of grey willows is ever nurtured

sluggish. They have not the strength or energy to struggle back to the lake against the current; their only motion is a repetition of the same old gyration—up to the drains, round, and back again. At any rate, this is the best I can make of a very obscure passage.

<sup>2</sup> This reference to their corpulence may contain also a side-reference to the appearance of the bellies, white or silvery flecked with red. See n. on *Carm.* 18. 10.

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semper dulcibus aquis amaritudo. 19. in medio profundus brevis insula, ubi supra molares naturaliter aggeratos per impactorum puncta remorum navalibus trita gyris meta protuberat, ad quam se iucunda ludentium naufragia collidunt. nam moris istie fuit senioribus nostris agonem Drepanitanum Troianae superstitionis imitari. iam vero ager ipse, quamquam hoc supra debitum, diffusus in silvis pictus in pratis, peccorosus in pascuis in pastoribus peculiosus. 20. sed non amplius moror, ne, si longior stilo terminus, relegentem te autumnus inveniatur. proinde mihi tribue veniendi celeritatem (nam redeundi moram tibi ipse praestabis), daturus hinc veniam, quod brevitatem sibi debitam paulo scrupulosior epistula excessit, dum totum ruris situm sollicita rimatur; quae tamen summovendi fastidii studio nec cuncta perstrinxit. quapropter bonus arbiter et artifex lector non paginam, quae spatia describit, sed villam, quae spatiosa describitur, grandem pronuntiabunt. vale.

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<sup>1</sup> The boat-race described by Virgil in *Aen.* V. 114 sqq.

## BOOK II. II. TO DOMITIUS

by these sweet waters. 19. In the middle of the deep part is a small island. Here a turning-post sticks up on the top of a natural accumulation of boulders; it is worn by the dents of oars dashed against it in the course of the circling evolutions of the ships, and it is the scene of the jolly wrecks of vessels which collide at the sports. For here it was the traditional custom of our elders to imitate the contest of Drepanum in the mythical tale of Troy.<sup>1</sup> Further, let me say of the land around (though this is going beyond my obligation) that it is extensive in its woodland and nicely coloured in its flowers, with plenty of sheep in its pastures and plenteous savings in the shepherds' purses. 20. But I will detain you no longer, for if I let my pen run on further, the autumn may find you still reading. So grant me only the favour of a speedy arrival (for you will allow yourself a prolonged stay as a favour to yourself), and find excuses for me inasmuch as my letter by its rather excessive precision has outrun its proper limit of length whilst anxiously scrutinizing the whole lay-out of this country estate—though even so, it has left some points untouched, in order to avoid tedium. And so the fair-minded judge and the reader of expert taste will decide that the bigness is not in the letter which has an estate of so much size to describe, but in the estate which has so much size to need description. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

## III

### SIDONIUS FELICI SVO SALVTEM

1. Gaudeo te, domine maior, amplissimae dignitatis infulas consecutum. scđ id mihi ob hoc solum destinato tabellario nuntiatum non minus gaudeo; nam licet in praesentiarum sis potissimus magistratus et in lares Philagrianos patricius apex tantis post saeculis tua tantum felicitate remeaverit, invenis tamen, vir amicitiarum servantissime, qualiter honorum tuorum crescat communione fastigium, raroque genere exempli altitudinem tuam humilitate sublimas. 2. sic quondam Quintum Fabium magistrum equitum dictatorio rigori et Papirianae superbiae favor publicus praetulit; sic et Gnaeum Pompeium super aemulos extulit numquam fastidita popularitas; sic invidiam Tiberianam pressit universitatis amore Germanicus. quocirca nolo sibi de successibus tuis principalia beneficia plurimum blandiantur, quae nihil tibi amplius conferre poterunt quam ut, si id noluissemus, transiremur inviti. illud peculiare tuum est, illud gratiae singularis, quod tam qui te aemulentur non habes quam non invenis qui sequantur. vale.

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\* On Felix see *Carm.* 9. 1 n. This letter congratulates him on his elevation to the patriciate, which he apparently received when Praetorian Prefect of Gaul. He may have succeeded Arvandus in this office in A.D. 469; Sundwall can scarcely be right in suggesting 474-475 as the date of his prefectship.

<sup>1</sup> See *Carm.* 7. 156 n.

<sup>2</sup> Q. Fabius Maximus, Master of the Horse to L. Papirius Cursor, fought against the Samnites in 325 B.C. in defiance of the dictator's orders, and was with difficulty saved from execu-



## BOOK II. III. TO FELIX

### III

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS DEAR FELIX, GREETING \*

1. I am delighted, my honoured lord, that you have gained the insignia of the most exalted dignity; and I am no less delighted that the news has been sent me by a special messenger; for though you are at present a magistrate of the highest rank and through your success alone the patrician honour has found its way back after so many generations to the house of the Philagrii,<sup>1</sup> yet you, with your characteristic regard for the claims of friendship, find ways of enhancing the greatness of your lofty dignities by geniality, and in a fashion far from common you raise your elevation still higher by a lowly spirit.

2. So in old days the approval of the public raised Quintus Fabius, the Master of the Horse, above the stern dictator, above the haughty Papirius;<sup>2</sup> so Pompey, who never disdained to be the people's man, was exalted above his rivals; so Germanicus, through the affection of the whole world, rose superior to the jealousy of Tiberius. Therefore I don't want the bounty of the Emperor to flatter itself by taking the chief credit for your success. The most it could have done for you would have been to make us reluctantly let you get ahead of us, supposing we had been unwilling; but the special feature of your case, a feature of peculiar charm, is that you never find people jealous of you any more than you find them rivalling you. Farewell.

tion by the intercession of the senate and the people and his aged father. He became the mainstay of Rome in the Second Samnite War.

# THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

## IV

### SIDONIUS SAGITTARIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Vir clarissimus Proiectur, domi nobilis et patre patruoque spectabilibus, avo etiam praestantissimo sacerdote conspicuus, amicitiarum tuarum, nisi respuis, avidissime sinibus infertur, et cum illi familiae splendor probitas morum, patrimonii facultas iuventutis alacritas in omne decus pari lance conquadrent, ita demum sibi tamen videbitur ad arcem fastigatissimae felicitatis evector, si gratiae tuae sodalitate potiatur. 2. Optantii clarissimi viri nuper vita functi filiam, quod deo prosperante succedat, licet a matre pupillae in coniugium petierit obtinueritque, parum tamen votorum suorum promotum censet effectum, nisi assensum tuum super his omnibus seu sedulitate sua seu precatu nostrae intercessionis adipiscatur. namque ipse, quantum ad institutionem spectat puellae, in locum mortui patris curarum participatione succedis, conferendo virgini parentis adfectum, patroni auctoritatem, tutoris officium. 3. quocirca, quia dignus es ut domus tuae celeberrimam disciplinam etiam procul positorum petat ambitus, sicut decet

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\* Sagittarius is not mentioned elsewhere.

<sup>1</sup> On the significance of the titles *clarissimus* and *spectabilis* see Bury I. 19 sqq., Hodgkin I. 603, 620.

## BOOK II. IV. TO SAGITTARIUS

### IV

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND SAGITTARIUS, GREETING \*

1. The honourable<sup>1</sup> Proiectus, a man of noble birth, who can claim the distinction of having a father and an uncle among the "Eminents" and also a grandfather who held an exalted position in the priesthood, is very eager to be received into the bosom of your friendship, if you are not averse. The lustre of his family, the uprightness of his character, the amplitude of his estate and the ardour of youth combine in equal measure to form a complete and well-balanced excellence, but he will not feel that he has reached the pinnacle of supreme happiness until he secures a share in your favour.

2. He has sought in marriage from her mother the daughter of the honourable Optantius, lately deceased; but although he has been successful in his suit—and may God bless the union!—still he considers that the fruition of his hopes is imperfectly accomplished unless in addition to all this felicity he obtains your approval either by his own assiduity or through my supplication as intercessor. For as regards the girl's upbringing you are yourself stepping into the dead father's place as a sharer in the responsibilities, bringing to the maiden at once a parent's love, a protector's support and a guardian's service.

3. So since it is no more than you deserve if the aspirations even of total strangers should seek a place in a family so famous for its good government as yours is, please act as befits a statesman of the honest party, and reward the modest appeal of your

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

bonarum partium viros, benignitate responsi proci supplicis verecundiam munerare et, qui ita expetitus deberes illi expetere pollicendam, securus permitte<sup>1</sup> promissam, quia sic te condicioni huic meritorum ratio praecepit, ut nec supersediti Optantio in liberos suos decuerit plus licere. vale.

### V

#### SIDONIUS PETRONIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Iohannes familiaris meus inextricabilem labyrinthum negotii multiplicis incurrit et donec suarum merita chartarum vel vestra scientia vel si qua est vestrae (si tamen est ulla) similis inspexerit, quid respuat, quid optet ignorat. ita se quodammodo bipertitae litis forma confundit, ut propositio sua quem actionis ordinem propugnatura, quem sit impugnatura, non noverit. 2. pro quo precem sedulam fundo, ut perspectis chartulis suis si quid iure competit instruat, quae qualiterve sint obicienda, quae refellenda monstrantes. non enim verebimur quod causae istius cursus, si de vestri manaverit fonte consilii, ulla contrastantum derivatione tenuetur. vale.

<sup>1</sup> permitte *M<sup>2</sup>T<sup>2</sup>*: promitte.

\* For Petronius see n. on I. 7. 4.

## BOOK II. v. TO PETRONIUS

suppliant suitor by the kindness of your answer. Had you yourself been so approached you would have been right in approaching her mother in turn and pressing for her approval of the match; but as it is, I ask you to sanction without hesitation an approval already given. Your kindness to the family has conferred upon you such a position of authority in the matter of this betrothal that even had Optantius been living he would have had no right to exercise a fuller control over his own children. Farewell.

### V

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND PETRONIUS, GREETING \*

1. My friend Iohannes is rushing into the hopeless labyrinth of a complicated litigation, and until the merits of his documents are examined by your learning or by some learning like yours (if there is any such), he does not know what to choose and what to reject. His suit is a sort of two-sided one, and its form is so perplexing that he does not know what line of procedure his pleading should be ready to advocate or to dispute. 2. On his behalf I pour forth an earnest petition that you will go through his papers and get ready any plea that is legally competent, instructing him what contentions to put forward and how, also what ones to refute. For if the current of his case starts from the head-waters of your advice, I have no fear of its being weakened through any diversion of the stream by his opponents. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

## VI

### SIDONIUS PEGASIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Proverbialiter celebre est saepe moram esse meliorem, sicuti et nunc experti sumus. Menstruanus amicus tuus longo istic tempore inspectus meruit inter personas nobis quoque caras devinctasque censerī, opportunus elegans, verecundus sobrius, parvus religiosus et his morum dotibus praeditus ut, quotiens in boni cuiusque adscitur amicitias, non amplius consequatur beneficii ipse quam tribuat. 2. haec tibi non ut ignorantī, sed ut iudicio meo satisfacerem, scripsi. quam ob rem triplex causa laetandi : tibi prima, cui amicos sic aut instituere aut eligere contingit; Arvernīs secunda, quibus hoc in eo placuisse confirmo, quod te probasse non ambigo; illi tertia, de quo boni quique bona quaeque iudicaverunt. vale.

## VII

### SIDONIUS EXPLICIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Quia iustitia vestra iure fit universitati per complura recti experimenta venerabilis, idcirco singulas quasque personas id ipsum efflagitantes

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\* Pegasius and Menstruanus are otherwise unknown.

† Nothing further is known of Explicius.

## BOOK II. VI. TO PEGASIUS

### VI

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND PEGASIUS. GREETING \*

1. It is a proverbial platitude that delay is often the better course, and now I have found it so. Your friend Menstruanus, having been here for a long time under my eye, has won the right to be counted also amongst *my* dear and devoted friends. He is a congenial companion, with refined manners; he is modest and temperate, thrifty and religious, and endowed with so excellent a character that when he is invited to share the friendship of any of the best people he contributes no less benefit than he gains.

2. This I write, not because it is news to you, but to do justice to my good opinion of him. There are thus three grounds for rejoicing: you have one, in having the good fortune to train up or to choose friends so successfully; the Arverni have another, for I can state with confidence that they have found in him the merit which I am clear that you recognised; and he has the third, in that the best people have formed the best possible opinion of him. Farewell.

### VII

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND EXPLICIUS. GREETING †

1. Since your impartiality is rightly respected by the world at large as a result of many experiences of your rectitude, I gladly and eagerly dispatch all and sundry (as indeed they themselves urgently

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

in examen vestrum libens et avidus émitto, quam primum ambiens me discussionis, illos simultatis onere laxari; quod demum ita sequetur, si non ex solido querimonias partium verecundus censor excludas; quamquam et hoc ipsum, quod copiam tui iurgantibus difficile concedis, indicium sit bene indicaturi: quis enim se non ambiat arbitrum legi aut pretio aliquid indulturus aut gratiae? 2. igitur ignosce ad tam sanctae conscientiae praerogativam raptim perneciterque properantibus, quandoquidem sententiam tuam nec victus ut stolidus accusat nec victor ut argutus inridet, veritatisque respectu dependunt tibi addicti reverentiam, gratiam liberati. proinde impense obsecro ut inter Alethium et Paulum quae veniunt in disceptationem, mox ut utrimque fuerint opposita, discingas. namque, ni fallor, supra decemvirales pontificalesque sententias aegritudini huius prope interminabilis iurgii sola morum tuorum temperantia solita iudicandi salubritate medicabitur. vale.

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<sup>1</sup> This interpretation of the words is due to Dr. Semple, *Quaest. Exeg.*, p. 14.



## BOOK II. VII. TO EXPLICITUS

desire) to be weighed in the scales of your judgment. My design in so doing is to get myself relieved at the earliest possible moment from the burden of examining the case and them from the burden of a quarrel. This will be accomplished only if your modest reluctance to play the censor does not lead you to shut out the grievances of the parties entirely from your presence,—and yet the very fact that you are so unwilling to give a hearing to disputants is an indication that your judgment will be fair; for who would not seek to be chosen as umpire if he were ready to concede something to bribery or favour?

2. Be gentle, therefore, to those who are now hurrying with all haste and speed to seek the advantage of your strict sense of right, for when you give the verdict the defeated party never impugns it with the idea that he has been outwitted, nor does the successful party sneer at it with the idea that he has played a clever trick,<sup>1</sup> but in recognition of your honesty the condemned respect you and the acquitted are grateful to you. And so with the points at issue between Alethius and Paulus: I earnestly entreat you to settle them as soon as each side has stated its case; for in my opinion, better than any decisions of decemviri or pontifices, the mere moderation of your character will be able to cure the painfulness of this almost interminable dispute by virtue of your usual health-giving judgment. Farewell.

# THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

## VIII

### SIDONIUS DESIDERATO SVO SALVTEM

1. Maestissimus haec tibi nuntio. decessit nudius tertius non absque iustitio matrona Philomathia, morigerā coniūnx domina clemens, utilis mater pia filia, cui debuerit domi forisque persona minor obsequium, maior officium, aequalis adfectum. haec cum esset unica iam diu matris amissae, facile diversis blandimentorum generibus effecerat ne patri adhuc iuveni subolis sexus alterius desideraretur. nunc autem per subita suprema virum caelibatu, patrem orbitate confodit. his additur quod quinque liberum parens immaturo exitu reddidit infortunatam fecunditatem. qui parvuli si matre sospite perdidissent iam diu debilem patrem, minus pupilli existimarentur.

2. hanc tamen, si quis haud incassum honor cadaveribus impenditur, non vispillonum sandapilari-  
orumque ministeria ominosa tumulavere; sed cum libitinam ipsam flentes omnes, externi quoque, prensitarent remorarentur exoscularentur, sacerdotum propinquorumque manibus excepta perpetuis sedibus dormienti similior inlata est. post quae precatu parentis orbatu neniam funebrem non per

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\* Desideratus is otherwise unknown.

## BOOK II. VIII. TO DESIDERATUS

### VIII

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND DESIDERATUS, GREETING \*

1. I write to you in the greatest grief. Three days ago there departed from us amid general mourning the Lady Philomathia, a dutiful wife and a kind mistress, a busy mother and a devoted daughter, one to whom in social and domestic life her inferiors owed respect, her superiors consideration, her equals affection. Although she was an only child and had lost her mother long before, yet by her many charming ways she easily prevented her father, who was still in the prime of life, from grieving over his lack of offspring of the other sex. Now by her sudden death she has dealt a cruel blow both to the husband whom she has left a widower and to the father whom she has left childless. Another trouble is that she was the mother of five children, and her untimely decease has made her large family a misfortune. If the little ones had kept their mother and lost their father, who has long been disabled, they would seem less orphaned.

2. But happily in her case (if there is aught but vanity in the honours paid to dead bodies) it was not by the ill-omened offices of common bearers and attendants that she was laid in the tomb; on the contrary, whilst all who attended, even those outside the family circle, clasped the very bier, held it back and kissed it, her body was lifted up by the hands of the clergy and her relatives, and she was conveyed to her everlasting home, more like one asleep. After this, at the request of her bereaved father, I com-

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

elegos sed per hendecasyllabos marmori incisam  
planctu prope calente dictavi. quam si non satis  
improbas, ceteris epigrammatum meorum volu-  
minibus applicandam mercennarius bybliopola sus-  
cipiet; si quod secus, sufficit saxo carmen saxeum  
contineri. 3. hoc enim epitaphion est :

Occasa celeri feroque raptam  
gnatis quinque patrique coniugique  
hoc flentis patriae manus locarunt  
matronam Philomathiam sepulchro.  
o splendor generis, decus mariti, 5  
prudens casta decens severa dulcis  
atque ipsis senioribus sequenda,  
discordantia quae solent putari  
morum commoditate copulasti :  
nam vitae comites bonae fuerunt 10  
libertas gravis et pudor facetus.  
hinc est quod decimam tuae saluti  
vix actam trieteridem dolemus  
atque in temporibus vigentis aevi  
iniuste tibi iusta persoluta. 15

Placeat carmen necne : tu propera civitatemque  
festinus invise ; debes enim consolationis officium  
duorum civium domibus adflictis. quod ita solvas  
deum quaeso, ne umquam tibi redhibeatur. vale.

## BOOK II. VIII. TO DESIDERATUS

posed, almost before the violence of my grief had abated, a funeral dirge, not in elegiacs but in hendecasyllables, and this has been engraved on marble. If you are not seriously displeased with it, the bookseller I employ will undertake to add it to the other sheets of my epigrams;<sup>1</sup> but if you feel otherwise about it, it is enough that a poem which is heavy as stone should be preserved on stone.

3. This is the funeral inscription:

“Torn from her father, husband, and five children by a swift and merciless death, the Lady Philomathia has been laid in this tomb by the hands of her weeping fellow-citizens. Pride of your family, glory of your husband, wise, chaste, gracious, upright and kind, a model even to your elders, you have by your sweet reasonableness combined things that are wont to be counted opposed, for a serious frankness and a merry modesty were the constant attendants of your virtuous life. For this cause do we grieve that you have hardly fulfilled three decades of existence and that in the years of vigorous life the last dues have been paid to you unduly soon.”

Whether you like this poem or not, bestir yourself and make haste to visit our town; for you owe the duty of consolation to the afflicted families of two fellow-citizens. I pray God that you may discharge that duty without ever requiring a repayment of it for yourself. Farewell.

<sup>1</sup> For a discussion of this sentence see *Intro.*, p. lxvi, n. 2.

# THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

## IX

### SIDONIUS DONIDIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Quaeris cur ipse iampridem Nemausum profectus vestra serum ob adventum desideria producam. reddo causas <sup>re</sup>ditus tardioris nec moras meas prodere moror, quia quae mihi dulcia sunt tibi quoque. inter agros amoenissimos, humanissimos dominos, Ferreolum et Apollinarem, tempus voluptuosissimum exegi. praediorum his iura contermina, domicilia vicina, quibus interiecta gestatio peditem lassat neque sufficit equitatus. colles aedibus superiores exercentur vinitori et olivitori: Aracynthus et Nysam, celebrata poetarum carminibus iuga, censeas. uni domui in plana patentiaque, alteri in nemora prospectus; sed nihilo minus dissimilis situs similiter oblectat. 2. quamquam de praediorum quid nunc amplius positione, cum restat hospitalitatis ordo reserandus? iam primum sagacissimis in hoc exploratoribus destinatis, qui reditus nostri iter aucuparentur, domus utraque non solum tramites aggerum publicorum verum etiam calles compendiis tortuosos atque pastoria deverticula insedit, ne quo casu dispositis officiorum insidiis elaberemur. quas incidimus, fateor, sed minime

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\* Donidius was an Arvernian (III. 5. 3) and a *vir spectabilis* (*ib.* § 1). See also VI. 5. On Tonantius see *Carm.* 24. 34 n.; on Apollinaris, *ib.* 52 n.

<sup>1</sup> For Aracynthus see note on *Carm.* 15. 32. The name Nysa was applied to various mountains and places associated with the cultivation of the vine and the legends of Dionysus; an enumeration of them may be found in any classical dictionary. Cf. *Carm.* 22. 233.

## BOOK II. IX. TO DONIDIUS

### IX

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND DONIDIUS, GREETING \*

1. You ask me why, having started long ago for Nemausus, I am causing you so long a disappointment by my tardiness in arriving. I will give you my reasons for my belated return, and I will not be slow to explain my slowness, for what is pleasurable to me is so to you also. I have spent the most delicious time in visiting two charming properties and two most sympathetic hosts, Ferreolus and Apollinaris. Their estates have a common boundary, and their residences are near, being connected by a road which is long enough to tire the pedestrian but hardly long enough for a ride. The hills which rise above the buildings are cultivated by the vine-dresser and the olive-grower: you would think them Aracynthus and Nysa,<sup>1</sup> those heights so greatly lauded in poetic song. One house has a view over flat and open ground, the other looks out on woods; yet though they differ in their situation they are alike in their charm. 2. But why should I say more of the lie of the farms when there remains to be disclosed the whole scheme of my entertainment? First of all, the cleverest scouts were sent out to keep watch on the route of my return journey, and the two household staffs took up positions not only on the various courses of the public highways but also on the rough tracks with their intricate short cuts and on the bypaths used by shepherds, in order to leave me no chance of eluding the traps which their kindness had arranged. I admit that I was

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

inviti, iusque iurandum confestim praeberere compulsi, ne, priusquam septem dies evolverentur, quāquam de itineris nostri continuatione meditemur. 3. igitur mane cotidiano partibus super hospite prima et grata contentio, quāenam potissimum antea edulibus nostris culina fumaret; nec sane poterat ex aequo divisioni lanceam ponere vicissitudo, licet uni domui mecum, alteri cum meis vinculum foret propinquitatis, quia Ferreolo praefectorio viro praeter necessitudinem sibi debitam dabat aetas et dignitas primi invitatoris praerogativam. 4. illicet a deliciis in delicias rapiebamur. vix quodcumque vestibulum intratum, et ecce huc<sup>1</sup> sphaeristarum contrastantium paria inter rotatiles catastropharum gyros duplicabantur, huc inter aleatoriarum vocum competitiones frequens crepitantium fritillorum tesserarumque strepitus audiebatur; huc libri adfatim in promptu (videre te crederes aut grammaticales pluteos aut Athenaei cuneos aut armaria exstructa Bybliopolarum): sic tamen quod, qui inter matronarum cathedras codices erant, stilus his religiosus inveniebatur, qui vero per subsellia patrumfamilias, hi coturno Latiaris eloquii nobilitabantur; licet quāepiam volumina quorumpiam auctorum servarent in causis disparibus dicendi parilitatem: nam similis

<sup>1</sup> huc *def. Mohr, Praef. p. xvii.*

<sup>1</sup> Ferreolus was related to Papianilla, the wife of Sidonius. We do not know the degree of relationship between Sidonius and Apollinaris.

<sup>2</sup> The meaning is uncertain. See V. 17. 7 for a longer description of a ball-game.

<sup>3</sup> Possibly Hadrian's famous educational institution at Rome (IX. 14. 2), but various provincial towns copied both the idea and the name (IX. 9. 13).



## BOOK II. IX. TO DONIDIUS

caught, but by no means against my will, and I was at once forced to take an oath that I would not give a thought to the resumption of my journey till seven days were passed. 3. Each morning saw the start of a really charming contest between the two parties, about their guest, to decide which of the two kitchens should be the earlier to steam with my meal; and it was really impossible to keep the balance, even by alternation, although one house had the tie of kinship with myself, the other with my family;<sup>1</sup> because Ferreolus is of prefectorian rank, and his age and standing, added to the just claims of his relationship, gave him a prior right to invite me. 4. Well, I was hurried from bliss to bliss. Hardly had I entered one vestibule or the other when behold! I found on one side opposing ball-players bending low amid the whirling evolutions of the *catastrophæ*;<sup>2</sup> in another quarter I would hear the clatter of rattling dice-boxes and of dice mingled with the rival shouts of the gamesters; in another part were books in any number ready to hand; you might have imagined yourself looking at the shelves of a professional scholar or at the tiers in the Athenaeum<sup>3</sup> or at the towering presses of the booksellers. The arrangement was such that the manuscripts near the ladies' seats were of a devotional type, while those among the gentlemen's benches were works distinguished by the grandeur of Latin eloquence; the latter, however, included certain writings of particular authors which preserve a similarity of style though their doctrines are different;<sup>4</sup> for it was a

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Christian as well as pagan writers came in this category. Sidonius wishes to make it clear that Christian reading was not confined to the women.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

scientiae viri, hinc Augustinus hinc Varro, hinc Horatius hinc Prudentius lectitabantur. <sup>5.</sup> quos inter Adamantius Origenes <sup>1</sup> Turrano Rufino interpretatus sedulo fidei nostrae lectoribus inspiciebatur; pariter et, prout singulis cordi, diversa censesentes sermocinabamur, cur a quibusdam protomystarum tamquam scaevus cavendusque tractator improbaretur, quamquam sic esset ad verbum sententiamque translatus ut nec Apuleius Phaedonem sic Platonis neque Tullius Ctesiphontem sic Demosthenis in usum regulamque Romani sermonis exscripserint. 6. studiis hisce dum nostrum singuli quique, prout libuerat, occupabantur, ecce et ab archimagiro adventans, qui tempus instare curandi corpora moneret, quem quidem nuntium per spatia clepsydrae horarum incrementa servantem probabat competenter ingressum quinta digrediens. prandebamus breviter

<sup>1</sup> an Origenis ?

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<sup>1</sup> *Scientia* here means expert skill, artistic mastery, as in the next letter, § 6; the meaning "erudition" would not suit the mention of Horace and Prudentius, who are compared as masters of lyric poetry, and the previous sentence shows that Sidonius is thinking only of style, or of style and diction. It is strange to find Varro ranked as an artist in prose with Augustine, and almost as strange to find him classed among those "distinguished by the grandeur of Latin eloquence." Sidonius expresses admiration for Varro's style also in *Epist.* VIII. 6. 18. As a matter of fact, *scientia* in the sense of erudition was the leading characteristic of Varro, as Quintilian says in a passage which gives the lie direct to these two sentences of Sidonius (Varro "is more likely to enhance one's knowledge than one's style," *plus scientiae conlaturus quam eloquentiae*, *Inst. Or.* X. 1. 95); and Augustine himself says very much the same thing (*Civ. Dei* VI. 2). Augustine drew largely upon Varro's historical and antiquarian researches, and frequently mentions him in the *De Civitate Dei*. It may be a

## BOOK II. IX. TO DONIDIUS

frequent practice to read writers whose artistry was of a similar kind<sup>1</sup>—here Augustine, there Varro, here Horace, there Prudentius. 5. Amongst these books, the translation of the *Adamantius* of Origen by Turranius Rufinus<sup>2</sup> was diligently studied by readers of our faith. We would all join in a discussion, expressing our various views just as we felt inclined. We debated why Origen was condemned by some of our chief hierophants as an inept and dangerous expositor, and yet his works had been translated into Latin with such faithfulness to the letter and the spirit that Apuleius could not be said to have turned Plato's *Phaedo* or Tully Demosthenes' *Ctesiphon*<sup>3</sup> into such a perfect expression of the theory and the usage of Latin speech. 6. While all and sundry occupied themselves in these pursuits according to their individual tastes, a messenger would approach from the head cook to tell us that the time for refreshment was at hand. He had his eye on the passage of the hours as marked by the water-clock, and as the fifth hour was just departing he was proved to have arrived just at the right moment. The luncheon was at once short and

vague recollection of this that makes Sidonius compare the two as literary artists.

<sup>2</sup> Turranius (or Tyrannius) Rufinus, a contemporary of Jerome, translated the five books of dialogues "On the true belief in God," falsely ascribed to Origen, in which Adamantius is the chief speaker. The translation was certainly not faithful; Rufinus was fond of altering or modifying his originals, often in the direction of orthodoxy.

<sup>3</sup> These translations by Apuleius and Cicero are no longer extant, though we still possess Cicero's *De Optimo Genere Oratorum*, which was meant as an introduction to his translations of the speeches for and against Ctesiphon by Demosthenes (*De Corona*) and Aeschines (*In Ctesiphontem*).

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

copiose, senatorium<sup>1</sup> ad morem, quo<sup>s</sup> insitum institutumque multas epulas paucis parabsidibus<sup>appari</sup>, quamvis convivium per edulia nunc assa nunc iurulenta varietur. inter bibendum narratiunculae, quarum cognitu hilararemur institueremur, quia eas bifariam orditas laetitia peritiaque comitabantur. quid multa? sancte pulchre abundanter accipiebamur. 7. inde surgentes, si Vorocingi cramus (hoc uni praedio nomen), ad sarcinas et deversorium pedem referebamus; si Prusiani (sic fundus alter

<sup>1</sup> seniorum *Fertig*.

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<sup>1</sup> Notable among the many attempts to restrain the extravagance of the upper classes in their feasts was the action of C. Fabricius Luscinus, who as censor in 275 B.C. expelled from the Senate P. Cornelius Rufinus (an ancestor of the dictator Sulla: Plutarch, *Sull.* 1) because he possessed ten pounds (or, according to another account, more than ten pounds) of silver plate. This incident is recalled again and again by writers of later ages (see, for example, the references given by Friedlaender on Juvenal IX. 142), and it, or the law (if there was such a law) on which Fabricius acted, is probably the ultimate source of the custom mentioned here. Such sumptuary restrictions as those of Fabricius and many others were powerless to stem the tide of luxury, but it is interesting to find his action cited even as late as Tertullian in order to lash the extravagance of the times. In *Apol.* c. 6, after referring to the expulsion of P. Cornelius from the Senate, he goes on to say that in his time "whole mines of silver" are wrought into dishes.

The word *parabsis* (*parapsis*, *paropsis*) is applied to a large square dish: see Mayor on Juvenal III. 142.

<sup>2</sup> The difficulty of interpreting *deversorium* is greatly increased by the use here of the first person plural. Nearly everywhere in this paragraph the meaning must be really plural, but if we take it so at the end of the first sentence we shall have to assume that Sidonius was not the only guest staying there at the time; otherwise the words *ad sarcinas* . . . *referebamus* would scarcely be intelligible. This notion,

## BOOK II. IX. TO DONIDIUS

lavish, in the style of senators, who have an inherited and established practice of having abundant viands served up on few dishes,<sup>1</sup> although the meal is varied by having some of the meats roasted and others stewed. As we sat over our wine there were short stories, for amusement or instruction; they were started in two sets, bringing mirth and edification respectively. To sum up, our entertainment was moral, elegant, and profuse. 7. We then rose from table, and if we were at Vorocingus (this was the name of one of the estates) we returned to our baggage and our lodging;<sup>2</sup> if we were at Prusianum

however, seems at first sight to be contradicted by *assecularum meorum* in § 8; if there were other guests, their servants as well as those of Sidonius must have been included in the convivial company. But Sidonius would know and recognise his own servants, and it does not really follow that there were no servants of other guests in the indiscriminate crowd. Much difficulty is removed if we assume that the plural verbs have a plural meaning throughout the paragraph; moreover, several parts of this letter seem to imply that there were other guests besides Sidonius.

*Deversorium* may be applied to temporary quarters of various kinds. In I. 5. 9 it means "inn" or "boarding-house"; the latter is perhaps the meaning in VII. 2. 6. Here it seems to refer to some such accommodation near the house of Apollinaris. Building was still going on at both houses (§ 8 *init.*); it was indeed going on at Vorocingus when Sidonius wrote the epilogue to his poems, and his mention of it in *Carm.* 24. 54 sq. may have been suggested by what he had recently seen on the visit described here. Thus the inferences sometimes drawn from this letter about the limited accommodation at Gallo-Roman country-houses must not be taken too seriously.

Dr. Sempke makes the tempting suggestion that *deversorium* both here and in II. 2. 13 means "guest-room." We should then have to suppose that Sidonius was staying with Apollinaris at Vorocingus, and that after lunching there he simply retired to his own room for the siesta; on the other hand, when he had lunched at Prusianum, one of the sons of

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

nuncupabatur), Tonantium cum fratribus, lectissimos æquaeavorum nobilium principes, stratis ~~sub~~ effiebamus, quia nec facile crebro cubilium nostrorum instrumenta circumferebantur. excusso torpore meridiano paulisper equitabamus, quo facilius pectora marcida cibus cenatoria fami exacuercimus. 8. balneas habebat in opere uterque hospes, in usu neuter; sed cum vel pauxillum bibere desisset assecularum meorum famulorumque turba compotrix, quorum cerebris hospitales creterrae nimium immersae dominabantur, vicina fonti aut fluvio raptim scrobis fodiebatur, in quam forte cum lapidum cumulus ambustus dmitteretur, antro in hemisphaerii formam corylis flexibilibus<sup>1</sup> intexto fossa inardescens operiebatur, sic tamen ut superiectis Cilicum velis patentia intervalla virgarum lumine excluso tenebrarentur, vaporem repulsura salientem, qui undae ferventis aspergine flammatis silicibus excuditur. 9. hic nobis trahebantur horae non absque sermonibus salsis iocularibusque; quos inter halitu nebulae stridentis oppletis involutisque saluberrimus sudor eliciebatur; quo, prout libuisset, effuso coctilibus aquis ingerebamur, quarumque<sup>2</sup> fotu cruditatem nostram tergente resoluti aut fontano deinceps frigore putcalique aut fluviali copia

<sup>1</sup> flexilibus *R*, fortasse recte.

<sup>2</sup> quarumque *LV*: harumque (*h in ras. N*).

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Ferreolus gave up his own bed to him. But the use of the plural above mentioned seems against this view. Again, as Sidonius tells us in § 4 that whenever he entered either vestibule he found games going on, the most natural inference is that he was not staying in either house. In the third place, if he were staying with either of his hosts, surely he would have told us which of them had the pleasure of putting him up, especially as he makes so much in § 3 of their friendly

## BOOK II. IX. TO DONIDIUS

(so the other property was called) we turned out of their beds Tonantius<sup>1</sup> and his brothers, the flower of all the young nobles of their age, because it was not easy to carry our own sleeping-kit so often from place to place. After shaking off the midday drowsiness we took short rides to whet our appetites, jaded with eating, to the keenness needful for dinner. 8. Both my entertainers had baths in course of erection; in neither case were they in working order. However, when the convivial crowd consisting of my attendants and the household servants, whose heads the hospitable bowl was wont to souse and overpower, had left off drinking, at least for the moment, a trench would be hastily dug close to the spring or the river, and a pile of heated stones poured into it. Then while the ditch was heating it was roofed over with a dome constructed of pliant hazel twigs twined into a hemispherical shape; in addition, rugs of hair-cloth were thrown over this roof, shutting out the light and darkening the open spaces between the twigs, so as to keep in the rising steam which is created by pouring boiling water on hot stones. 9. Here we whiled away the hours with no lack of witty and humorous conversation, in the course of which we became wrapped and choked in the breath of the hissing mist, which drew forth a wholesome perspiration. When this had poured out sufficiently to please us we plunged into the hot water. Its kindly warmth relaxed us and cleared our clogged digestions, and then we braced ourselves in turn with the cold water of the spring and the well or in

contest for the pleasure of feeding him. In II. 2. 13, however, Dr. Semple's interpretation of *derisorium* may be right.

<sup>1</sup> The young Tonantius is mentioned in *Carm.* 24. 31.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

solidabamur: siquidem domibus medius it Vardo fluvius, nisi cum deflua nive pastus impalluit, flavis ruber glareis et per alveum perspicuus quietus calculosusque neque ob hoc minus piscium ferax delicatiorum. 10. dicerem et cenas et quidem unctissimas, nisi terminum nostrae loquacitati, quem verecundia non adhibet, charta posuisset; quarum quoque replicatio fieret amoena narratu, nisi epistolae tergum madidis sordidare calamis erubesceremus. sed quia et ipsi in procinctu sumus teque sub ope Christi actutum nobis invisere placet, expeditius tibi cenae amicorum in mea cena tuaque commemorabuntur, modo nos quam primum hebdomadis exactae spatia completa votivae restituant esuritioni, quia disruptum ganea stomachum nulla sarcire res melius quam parsimonia solet. vale.

### X

#### SIDONIUS HESPERIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Amo in te quod litteras amas et usquequaque praeconiis cumulativissimis excolere<sup>1</sup> contendo tantae diligentiae generositatem, per quam nobis non solum initia tua verum etiam studia nostra com-

<sup>1</sup> extollere *T*.

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<sup>1</sup> The Gard, a name known to most people from the famous Pont du Gard, near Nîmes. This is the only passage where the ancient name of the river is mentioned.

\* Hesperius is praised also in IV. 22. 1. He taught the son of Ruricius, three of whose letters are addressed to him.



## BOOK II. x. TO HESPERIUS

the full flow of the river; for I should explain that the river Vardo<sup>1</sup> flows midway between the houses. Except when it is swollen by the melting of the snows and turns yellowish, it has a red tinge caused by the brownish shingle, and it passes down its channels transparent, smooth, and pebbly, but is none the less on that account prolific in choice fishes. 10. I should have gone on to tell you of our dinners—sumptuous ones, I assure you—had not my paper imposed upon my chatter a limit which my sense of decency is failing to set. The record of these feasts would indeed form a pleasant tale, did I not blush to disfigure the back of my letter with a “soaked” pen. But as I am now approaching you in person and intend with Christ’s help to visit you immediately, the dinners of my friends will be more expeditiously related when you and I are dining together. I only hope that the completion of a week’s interval will see the prompt restoration of that feeling of hunger for which I yearn: when the stomach is upset by a debauch, nothing repairs it so well as abstemiousness. Farewell.

### X

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND HESPERIUS, GREETING \*

1. What I love in you is that you are a lover of letters, and I strive everywhere to glorify with the most profuse acclamations the noble spirit of your great industry, by which you make me think well not only of your first attempts but also of my own

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

meñdas. nam cum videmus in huiusmodi disciplinam iuniorum ingenia succrescere, propter ~~et~~ <sup>et</sup> hos quoque subduximus ferulæ e manum, copiosissimum fructum nostri laboris adipiscimur. illud appone, quod tantum increbruit multitudo desideriorum ut, nisi vel paucissimi quique meram linguæ Latinaris proprietatem de trivialium barbarismorum robigine vindicaveritis, eam brevi abolitam defleamus interemptamque: sic omnes nobilium sermonum purpuræ per incuriam vulgi decolorabuntur. 2. sed istinc alias: interea tu quod petis accipe. petis autem ut, si qui versiculi mihi fluxerint postquam ab alterutro discessimus, hos tibi pro quadam morarum mercede pernumcrem. dicto pareo; nam praeditus es quamquam iuvenis hac animi maturitate, ut tibi etiam natu priores gerere morem concupiscamus. ecclesia nuper constructa Lugduni est, quæ studio papæ Patientis summum coepti operis accessit, viri sancti strenui, severi misericordis quique per uberem munificentiam in pauperes humanitatemque non minora bonæ conscientiae culmina levet. 3. huius igitur aedis extimis rogatu præfati antistitis tumultuarium carmen inscripsi trochæis triplicibus adhuc mihi

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<sup>1</sup> Juvenal I. 15.

<sup>2</sup> This church, which replaced an older one, was dedicated to St. Justus. It was destroyed by the Huguenots in the year 1562. Bishop Patiens of Lyons, a very wealthy prelate, gave freely of his means for the building and restoration of churches and for the relief of distress. When Euric laid waste the lands which he overran after his victory in A.D. 471 (Introd., p. xxix), Patiens rescued the inhabitants from the

## BOOK II. x. TO HESPERIUS

studies. For when I see our young men of ability rising ~~in~~ their turn to cultivate that art in pursuit of which I too "flinched from the rod,"<sup>1</sup> I win a most ample harvest from my own efforts. Consider too that the mob of the sluggards has so grown in numbers that unless there are at least a modest few like yourself to defend the exact use of the language of Latium from the rust of vulgar barbarisms, we shall in a short time be lamenting its extinction and annihilation, so sadly will all the bright ornaments of noble expression be dulled by the slovenliness of the mob. 2. But of this more some other time: meanwhile let me give you what you ask for. It is your wish that, if any humble verses have flowed from my pen since we separated, I should deliver them to you as a kind of payment for the length of my absence. I obey your command; for though you are young you are endowed with such ripeness of mind that even we who are your elders are eager to meet your wishes. A church has recently been built at Lugdunum, and the undertaking has come to the point of completion through the zeal of Bishop Patiens,<sup>2</sup> a man both holy and active, strict and compassionate, and one who is building up by his noble generosity to the poor and by his kindliness the not less lofty edifice of a guileless conscience. 3. For the far end of this temple, at the request of the aforesaid dignitary, I have written offhand an inscription in the three-trochee metre,<sup>3</sup> with which up to this date I, and

horrors of famine, and he rendered a similar service to Clermont at a critical time. See *Epist.* VI. 12, which is addressed to him.

<sup>3</sup> In *Carm.* 23. 25 sqq. the hendecasyllabic metre is more fully described as consisting of a spondee, a dactyl, and three trochees, i.e. — — | — — — | — — | — — | — —.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

iamque tibi perfamiliaribus. namque ab hexametris eminentium poetarum Constantii et ~~S~~ <sup>Secundini</sup> viciniantia altari basilicae latera clarescunt, quos in hanc paginam admitti nostra quam maxime verecundia vetat, quam suas otiositates trepidanter edentem meliorum carminum comparatio premit. 4. nam sicuti novam nuptam nihil minus quam pulchrior promba decet, sicuti, si vestiatur albo, fuscus quisque fit nigrior, sic nostra, quantula est cumque, tubis circumfusa potioribus stipula vilescit, quam mediam loco, infimam merito despicabiliorem pronuntiari non imperitia modo sed et arrogantia facit. quapropter illorum iustius epigrammata micant quam istaec, quae imaginariæ tantum et quodammodo umbratiliter effingimus. sed quorsum ista? quin potius paupertinus flagitatae cantilenæ culmus immurmuret.

5

Quisquis pontificis patrisque nostri  
 conlaudas Patientis hic laborem,  
 voti compote supplicatione  
 concessum experiare quod rogabis.  
 aedis celsa nitet nec in sinistrum  
 aut dextrum trahitur, sed arce frontis  
 ortum prospicit æquinoctialem.  
 intus lux micat atque bratteatum  
 sol sic sollicitatur ad lacunar,  
 fulvo ut concolor erret in metallo. 10  
 distinctum vario nitore marmor  
 percurrit cameram solum fenestras,  
 ac sub versicoloribus figuris

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<sup>1</sup> See introd. to I. 1.

<sup>2</sup> His poetry is praised in V. 8.

## BOOK II. x. TO HESPERIUS

henceforth you also, can claim intimate familiarity. For the two sides of the basilica where they adjoin the altar are glorified by the hexameters of the eminent poets Constantius<sup>1</sup> and Secundinus;<sup>2</sup> these verses my modesty absolutely debars from a place in this letter, for a comparison with better poetry is too severe for a shrinking soul who is nervously exhibiting his own casual efforts. 4. For just as nothing becomes a bride so ill as a brideswoman of greater beauty, just as a man of dark skin is made blacker if clothed in white, so my humble pipe, puny as it is, becomes still meaner when set amid superior clarions; foisted into a place in their midst when it takes the lowest place in merit, it earns a double contempt by such a combination of presumption and incompetence. So the inscriptions by the poets I have named are more justly honoured than this of mine, which is a mere creation of hollow conceits and what may be called shadowy outlines. But why all this preamble? Rather let my sorry reed murmur the notes of the doggerel you have demanded of me:

"All you who here admire the work of Patiens, our bishop and father, may you by effectual supplication obtain the boon you ask for! The lofty temple sparkles and does not incline to right or left, but with its towering front faces the sunrise of the equinox. Within it the light flashes and the sunshine is so tempted to the gilded ceiling that it travels over the tawny metal, matching its hue. Marble diversified by various shining tints pervades the vaulting,<sup>3</sup> the floor, the windows; forming designs of diverse colour, a verdant grass-green encrustation brings winding lines

<sup>3</sup> This probably refers to the semi-dome over the apse, which regularly contained mosaic decoration.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

vernans herbida crusta sapphiratos flectit per prasinum vitrum lapillos. huic est porticus applicata triplex fulmentis Aquitanicis superba, ad cuius specimen remotiora claudunt atria porticus secundae, et campum medium procul locatas vestit saxea silva per columnas. hinc agger sonat, hinc Arar resultat, hinc sese pedes atque eques reflectit stridentum et moderator essedorum, curvorum hinc chorus helciariorum responsantibus alleluia ripis ad Christum levat amnicum celeuma. sic, sic psallite, nauta vel viator; namque iste est locus omnibus petendus, omnes quo via ducit ad salutem.	15                    30
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5. Ecce parui tamquam iunior imperatis: tu modo fac memineris multiplicato me faenore remunerandum, quoque id facilius possis voluptuosiusque, opus est ut sine dissimulatione lectites, sine fine lecturias; neque patiaris ut te ab hoc proposito propediem coniunx domum feliciter ducenda deflectat, sisque oppido meminens quod olim Marcia Hortensio, Terentia Tullio, Calpurnia Plinio, Pudentilla Apuleio, Rusticiana Symmacho legentibus meditantibusque candelas et candelabra tenuerunt.

6. certe si praeter oratoriam<sup>1</sup> contubernio feminarum poeticum ingenium et oris tui limam frequentium studiorum cotibus expolitam quereris obtundi, re-

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<sup>1</sup> rem oratoriam *codd. plerique*: *forlasse artem oratoriam*.

<sup>1</sup> Cloisters, in front of the atrium. A "triple colonnade" is one with three rows of columns.

## BOOK II. x. TO HESPERIUS

of sapphire-hued stones over the leek-green glass. Attached to this edifice is a triple colonnade rising proudly on columns of the marble of Aquitania.<sup>1</sup> A second colonnade on the same plan closes the atrium at the farther end, and a stone forest clothes the middle area <sup>2</sup> with columns standing well apart. On one side is the noisy high-road, on the other the echoing Arar; on the first the traveller on foot or on horse and the drivers of creaking carriages turn round; on the other, the company of the bargemen, their backs bent to their work, raise a boatmen's shout to Christ, and the banks echo their alleluia. Sing, traveller, thus; sing, boatman, thus; for towards this place all should make their way, since through it runs the road which leads to salvation."

5. See now, I have obeyed your command as though I were your junior; remember, however, that I have to be repaid with multiple interest. That you may do so the more easily and pleasantly, you must read constantly and without carelessness, and your thirst for reading must be without limit. You must not allow the thought that you will soon be happily married to turn you from this determination, ever remembering that in the old times of Marcia and Hortensius, Terentia and Tullius, Calpurnia and Pliny, Pudentilla and Apuleius, Rusticiana and Symmachus, the wives held candles and candlesticks for their husbands whilst they read or composed.

6. And by all means, if you lament that in addition to your oratorical skill your poetical capacity and the keen edge of your tongue, which has been sharpened on the whetstone of industrious study, are blunted by the society of ladies, remember that

<sup>2</sup> The nave.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

miniscere quod saepe versum Corinna cum suo Nasone complexit, Lesbia cum Catullo, C~~aes~~ensia cum Gaetulico, Argentaria cum Lucano, Cynthia cum Propertio, Delia cum Tibullo. proinde liquido claret studentibus discendi per nuptias occasionem tribui, desidibus excusationem. igitur incumbere, neque apud te litterariam curam turba depretiet imperitorum, quia natura comparatum est ut in omnibus artibus hoc sit scientiae pretiosior pompa, quo rarior. vale.

### XI

#### SIDONIUS RUSTICO SVO SALVTEM

1. Si nobis pro situ spatiisque regionum vicinamur nec a se praesentia mutua vasti itineris longinquitate discriminaretur, nihil apicum raritati licere in coeptae familiaritatis officia permitterem neque iam semel missa fundamenta certantis amicitiae diversis honorum generibus exstruere cessarem. sed animorum coniunctioni separata utrique porrectioribus terminis obsistit habitatio, equidem semel devinctis parum nocitura pectoribus. 2. sed tamen ex ipsa communium municipiorum discretione procedit quod, cum amicissimi simus, raritatem colloqui de prolixa terrarum interiectione venientem

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<sup>1</sup> See *Carm.* 23. 161 n.

<sup>2</sup> See *Carm.* 9. 259 n.

\* Rusticus is mentioned in VIII. 11. 3 *carm.* 36. He lived in or near Bordeaux. The language of this letter is extraordinarily stilted.



## BOOK II. XI. TO RUSTICUS

Corinna <sup>1</sup> often helped her Naso to complete a verse, and so ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> with Lesbia and Catullus, Caesennia and Gaetulicus, <sup>2</sup> Argentaria and Lucan, Cynthia and Propertius, Delia and Tibullus. So it is clear as daylight that literary workers find in marriage an opportunity for study and idlers an excuse for shirking it. To work, then, and do not let the cultivation of literature lose its value in your eyes because of the multitude of the ignorant; for it is a law of nature that in all the arts the splendour of attainment rises in value as it becomes rarer. Farewell.

### XI

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND RUSTICUS, GREETING \*

1. If we were neighbours in respect of domicile and distance and if our meeting face to face were not held off by the long mileage of an enormous journey, I would never allow the rarity of letters to have any effect upon the attentions proper to the intimacy we have contracted; nor would I be slow about building on the foundations (already laid once for all) of an emulously cultivated friendship by piling up various manifestations of my regard. But the union of our souls is obstructed by the extended space between our habitations, though this can certainly never injure our affections, which are joined for ever.
2. Nevertheless, it follows from the very separation of our respective townships that just because we are such close friends we are inclined to treat the rarity of our intercourse, which is due to the long stretch of country that lies between us, as a sin on each

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

in reatum volumus transferre communem, cum de naturalium rerum difficultate nec culpa ~~non~~ debeat manere nec venia. domine industris, gerulos litterarum de disciplinae tuae institutione formatos et morum eriliū verecundiam praefereutes opportune admisi, patienter audiui, competenter explicui. vale.

### XII

#### SIDONIUS AGRICOLAE SVO SALVTEM

1. Misisti tu quidem lembum mobilem solidum lecti capacem iamque cum piscibus; tum praeterea gubernatorem longe peritum, remiges etiam robustos expeditosque, qui scilicet ea rapiditate praetervolant amnis adversi terga qua deflui. sed dabis veniam quod invitanti tibi in piscationem comes venire dissimulo; namque me multo decumbentibus nostris validiora macroris retia tenent, quae sunt amicis quaeque et externis indolenda. unde te quoque puto, si rite germano moveris adfectu, quo temporis puncto paginam hanc sumpseris, de reditu potius cogitaturum. 2. Severiana, sollicitudo communis, inquietata primum lentae tussis impulsu febribus quoque iam fatigatur, hisque per noctes ingravescentibus; propter quod optat exire in suburbanum; litteras tuas denique cum sumeremus,

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\* On Agricola see introductory n. to I. 2. Severiana (§ 2) was the daughter of Sidonius. This letter was probably written at Lyons.

## BOOK II. XII. TO AGRICOLA

other's part, although when it is a case of natural obstacles we cannot rightly be the objects either of blame or of forgiveness. Illustrious lord, the bearers of your letters, men trained according to the principles of your system and displaying the modesty characteristic of their master, were admitted by me with due promptitude; I listened to them patiently and dispatched their business suitably. Farewell.

### XII

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS DEAR AGRICOLA, GREETING \*

1. You have sent me a boat which is swift and substantial, big enough to hold a couch and a load of fish too; also a boatman of wide experience and oarsmen so strong and brisk that they fly over the surface of the water as swiftly up-stream as down-stream. But you must excuse me for not availing myself of your invitation to join you in a fishing excursion; for with illness in our family I am held here by a much stronger kind of net, a net of affliction, which must needs bring grief to friends and strangers alike: so I think that if you feel a genuine brotherly affection for me, as soon as ever you take up this sheet you will think rather of returning here. 2. Severiana, our common anxiety, was in the first instance racked by an attack of persistent coughing, and is now beginning to suffer severely from bouts of fever as well, which become more acute at night; so she is anxious to move to our home outside the town; in fact, at the very moment that I took your letter in my hand we

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

egredi ad villulam iam parabamus. quocirca tu seu venias seu moreris, preces nostras orationibus iuva ut ruris auram desideranti salubriter cedat ipsa vegetatio. certe ego vel tua soror inter spem metumque suspensi credidimus eius tacedium augendum si voluntati iacentis obstitissemus. 3. igitur ardori civitatis atque torpori tam nos quam domum totam praevisio Christo pariter eximimus simulque medicorum consilia vitam assidentum dissidentumque, qui parum docti et satis seduli languidos multos officiosissime occidunt. sane contubernio nostro iure amicitiae Iustus adhibebitur, quem, si iocari liberet in tristibus, facile convincerem Chironica magis institutum arte quam Machaonica. quo diligentius postulandus est Christus obsecrandusque ut valetudini, cuius curationem cura nostra non invenit, potentia superna medeatur. vale.

### XIII

#### SIDONIUS SERRANO SVO SALVTEM

1. Epistulam tuam nobis Marcellinus togatus exhibuit, homo peritus virque amicorum. quae

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<sup>1</sup> Possibly veterinary medicine, with which the name of Chiron was specially associated in late Roman times; opposed to *Machaonica ars*, human medicine, from Machaon, physician of the Greeks in the Trojan war; but there may be a play on the Greek *χελων*, "worse": "the art of making worse."

## BOOK II. XIII. TO SERRANUS

were making<sup>2</sup> preparations to move to our little country house. Accordingly, whether you come here or stay away, support my prayers by your own petitions that as she pines for the country air even the motion of the journey may turn out for the good of her health. Anyhow, both your sister and I, though wavering between hope and fear, believed that our patient's discomfort would certainly be increased if we opposed her inclination. 3. Therefore (under Christ's guidance) we are taking ourselves and our whole household away from the heat and the oppressiveness of the city, and at the same time escaping from the counsels of the physicians, who attend and contend at the bedside; for with their scanty knowledge and immense zeal they most dutifully kill many sick folks. Justus indeed will be admitted to our household by his claim as a personal friend, though if one had been inclined to jest in sad circumstances, I should easily have proved to you that he is better trained in the art of Chiron<sup>1</sup> than in that of Machaon. So we must the more earnestly make our appeal to Christ and beseech Him that, as our diligence has procured no cure for the patient's malady, the power that is from above may cure it. Farewell.

### XIII

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND SERRANUS, GREETING \*

1. Marcellinus<sup>2</sup> the advocate, a man of tried wisdom and of many friends, showed me your letter.

\* Serranus is otherwise unknown.

<sup>2</sup> See *Carm.* 23. 465.

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

primóribus verbis salutatione libata reliquo sui tractu, qui quidem grandis est, patroni tui Petronii Maximi imperatoris laudes habebat; quem tamen tu pertinacius aut amabilius quam rectius veriusque felicissimum appellas, propter hoc quippe, cur per amplissimos fascium titulos fuerit evectus usque ad imperium. sed sententiae tali numquam ego assentior, ut fortunatos putem qui rei publicae praecipitibus ac lubricis culminibus insistent. 2. nam dici nequit quantum per horas fert in hac vita miseriarum vita felicium istorum, si tamen sic sunt pronuntiandi qui sibi hoc nomen ut Sulla praesumunt, nimirum qui supergressi ius fasque commune summam beatitudinem existimant summam potestatem, hoc ipso satis miseres, quod parum intellegunt inquietissimo se subiacere famulatu. nam sicut hominibus reges, ita regibus dominandi desideria dominantur. 3. hic si omittamus antecedentium principum casus vel secutorum, solus iste peculiaris tuus Maximus maximo nobis ad ista documento poterit esse, qui quamquam in arcem praefectoriam patriciam consularemque intrepidus ascenderat eosque quos gesserat magistratus ceu recurrentibus orbitis inexpletus iteraverat, cum tamen venit omnibus viribus ad principalis apicis abruptum, quandam potestatis immensae vertiginem sub corona patiebatur nec sustinebat dominus esse,

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<sup>1</sup> On Petronius Maximus see *Intro.*, p. xx.

## BOOK II. XIII. TO SERRANUS

In its opening it lightly conveys a greeting, and then for the rest of its length (which is considerable) it contains the praises of your protector, the Emperor Petronius Maximus,<sup>1</sup> to whom, with more persistency or kindness than justice or truth, you give the title of Most Happy, your reason being that he made his way up through all the most distinguished magisterial offices and finally reached the Imperial throne. But I can never agree with the view that counts as prosperous those who stand on the precipitous and slippery heights of public life. 2. For it is beyond the power of words to tell of the miseries which are endured every hour, life being what it is to-day, in the lives of these so-called happy men—if indeed they have any right to be so called when they appropriate this title in the spirit of a Sulla as men who have transgressed the universal principles of law and right and who consider supreme power to be supreme bliss, when all the while they are particularly wretched just because they fail to see that they are subject to a most harassing servitude. For as kings rule over men, so does the passion for mastery rule over kings. 3. Even if we here ignore the calamities of the rulers who preceded or succeeded him, this very Maximus whom you take as your hero will prove our point with the maximum of cogency; for although he had made his way up without faltering to the eminences of prefect, patrician and consul, and although, still unsatisfied, he had repeated the magistracies he had held as if they moved in recurring orbits, yet when by straining every nerve he reached the precarious peak of Imperial majesty, he felt beneath his crown dizziness, the result of boundless power; and the very man who had found it unbearable

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

qui non sustinuerat esse sub domino. 4. denique require in supradicto vitae prioris gratiam ~~potentiam~~ diuturnitatem eque diverso principatus paulo amplius quam bimenstris originem turbinem finem: profecto inuenies hominem beatiorem prius fuisse quam beatissimus nominaretur. igitur ille, cuius antea epulae mores, pecuniae pompae, litterae fascēs, patrimonia patrocinia florebant, cuius ipsa sic denique spatia vitae custodiebantur ut per horarum disposita clepsydras explicarentur, is nuncupatus Augustus ac sub hac specie Palatinis liminibus inclusus ante crepusculum ingemuit quod ad vota pervenerat. cumque mole curarum pristinae quietis tenere dimensum prohiberetur, veteris actutum regulae legibus renuntiavit atque perspexit pariter ire non posse negotium principis et otium senatoris. 5. nec fefellerunt futura maerentem; namque cum ceteros aulicos honores tranquillissime percurrisset, ipsam aulam turbulentissime rexit inter tumultus militum popularium foederatorum; quod et exitus prodidit novus celer acerbus, quem cruentavit Fortunae diu lenocinantis perfidus finis, quae virum ut scorpios ultima sui parte percussit. dicere solebat vir litteratus atque ob ingenii merita quaes-



## BOOK II. XIII. TO SERRANUS

to be under a master could not bear to be a master himself. 4. Now go back over the record of this man again and put in one scale his early life with its popularity, its power, and its long years of enjoyment, and in the other the beginning, the tumult and the ending of a principate which lasted for little more than two months: you will assuredly find that the man was more blest before the time when men spoke of him as Most Blessed. In his earlier life his hospitalities and his character, his wealth and his display, his literary reputation and his magistracies, his estate and his roll of clients, were splendid indeed; the very division of his time was so carefully looked after that it was measured and arranged by the hourly periods of the clock. But when he received the title of Augustus and was imprisoned on this pretence behind the doors of the palace, he groaned before evening that he had reached his ambition. A mass of responsibilities pressed upon him, and he could not maintain the programme of his earlier restful life; he at once abandoned the rules by which he had long regulated his existence, and understood that the business of an emperor and the quiet life of a senator could not go together. 5. His gloomy anticipations did not go unfulfilled, for although he had passed through all the other high offices of the court in peace and quietness, he actually ruled the court with violence, amid risings of the soldiers, the citizens, and the allied peoples; and all this was revealed also by his end, which was strange, swift and bitter: after fortune had long flattered him, her treacherous last act bathed him in blood, for like a scorpion she struck her favourite down with the tail-end. A man of culture who reached the rank

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

torius, partium certe bonarum pars magna, Fulgentius, ore se ex eius frequenter audisse, cum perosus pondus imperii veterem securitatem desideraret: "felicem te, Damocles, qui non uno longius prandio regni necessitatem toleravisti."

6. iste enim, ut legimus, Damocles provincia Siculus, urbe Syracusanus, familiaris tyranno Dionysio fuit. qui cum nimis laudibus bona patroni ut cetera scilicet inexpertus efferret: "vis," inquit Dionysius, "hodie saltem in hac mensa bonis meis pariter ac malis uti?" "libenter," inquit.<sup>1</sup> tunc ille confestim laetum clientem quamquam et attonitum plebeio tegmine erepto muricis Tyrii seu Tarentini conchyliato ditat induit et renidentem gemmis margaritisque aureo lecto sericatoque toreumati imponit. 7. cumque pransuro Sardanapallicum in morem panis daretur e Leontina segete confectus, insuper dapes cultae ferculis cultioribus apponerentur, spumarent Falerno gemmae capaces inque crystallis calerent unguenta glacialibus, huc<sup>2</sup> suffusa cinnamo ac ture cenatio spargeret peregrinos naribus odores et madescentes nardo capillos circumfusa florum sorta siccarent, coepit supra tergum sic recumbentis repente vibrari mucro dextris e lacunaribus, qui

<sup>1</sup> inquam LN<sup>1</sup>.

<sup>2</sup> huc LN<sup>1</sup>; hinc.

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<sup>1</sup> For the meaning of *toreuma* see n. on I. 2. 6.

## BOOK II. XIII. TO SERRANUS

of quaestor by virtue of his talents and who himself played a leading part in the good party (his name is Fulgentius) used to say that he had often heard from the man's very lips, when he was disgusted with the weight of empire and longed for the old tranquillity, the cry: "Happy you, Damocles, who had not to submit to the obligation of kingship for more than the duration of a single meal!" 6. Now this Damocles, as we read, a Sicilian by country and a Syracusan by citizenship, was an intimate of the prince Dionysius. When he praised in effusive terms the happy lot of his patron, having, of course, no means of knowing the other side of the picture, Dionysius said to him, "Would you like this very day, just for the duration of this meal, to enjoy my blessings and my ills alike?" "Willingly," said he. Without wasting a moment Dionysius stripped the humble robe from the back of his delighted but amazed vassal, glorified him with a purple-dyed robe of the mollusc of Tyre or of Tarentum, and set him, all resplendent with jewels and pearls, on a golden couch with a silk cover over the bedding.<sup>1</sup> 7. He was preparing to dine in the fashion of Sardanapallus; bread was handed him baked from the harvest of Leontini, and choice meats were set before him on dishes still more choice: large jewelled cups foamed with Falernian wine, and warm perfume lay in icy crystal; the reek of cinnamon and frankincense pervaded the dining-hall, wafting foreign scents to the nostrils; the encircling garlands of flowers were drying up the guests' nard-soaked hair. But suddenly, as he thus reposed, a naked sword which hung from the panelled ceiling began to shake over his shoulders, and seemed each moment about to fall

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

videbatur in iugulum purpurati iam iamque ruiturus; nam filo equinae saetae ligatus et ita pondore minax ut acumine gulam formidolosi Tantalco frenabat exemplo, ne cibi ingressi per ora per vulnera exirent. 8. unde post mixtas fletibus preces atque multimoda suspiria vix absolutus emicatumque prosiliens illa refugit celeritate divitias deliciasque regales qua solent appeti, reductus ad desideria mediocrium timore summorum et satis cavens ne beatum ultra diceret duceretque qui saeptus armis ac satellitibus et per hoc raptis incubans opibus ferro pressus premeret aurum. quapropter ad statum huiusmodi, domine frater, nescio an constet tendere beatos, patet certe miseros pervenire. vale.

### XIV

#### SIDONIUS MAVRSIO SVO SALVTEM

1. Audio industriae tuae votisque communibus uberiore proventu quam minabatur sterilis annus respondere vindemiam. unde et in pago Vialoscensi, qui Martialis aetate citeriore vocitatus est propter hiberna legionum Iulianarum, suspicor diuturnius

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\* Nothing further is known of Maurusius.

<sup>1</sup> Some identify this with Marsat, a village about 12 miles north of Clermont, others with Volvic, a little to the west of Marsat.

## BOOK II. XIV. TO MAURUSIUS

upon the throat of our man in purple; for it was fastened only with a thread of horsehair, and being alarming equally by its weight and by its sharp point it frustrated the appetite of the scared guest as if he had been Tantalus, for he feared that the food that entered by his mouth might find its exit through a gaping wound. 8. So he mingled prayers and tears and manifold sighs, and when at last he with difficulty won his freedom he leapt forth like a flash and retreated from the wealth and luxury of kingship with the alacrity with which these are usually sought; he was drawn back to the desire of a middle position by his fear of the highest, and was thoroughly warned for the future against calling or thinking happy the man who is surrounded by arms and guards, who by this means keeps jealous watch over the riches he has seized, and who grips his gold whilst he is in the grip of cold steel. And so, my lord and brother, I am not at all clear that those who press forward to such a position are blessed; but it is certain that those who reach it are wretched. Farewell.

### XIV

#### SIDONIUS TO HIS FRIEND MAURUSIUS. GREETING \*

1. I hear that the vintage is answering to your industry and to the prayers of the community with a richer crop than the barren year threatened; and so I imagine that you will stay some considerable time in the Pagus Vialoscensis,<sup>1</sup> which was formerly called Martialis because it became the winter quarters of the Julian legions; for in that district you

## THE LETTERS OF SIDONIUS

te moraturum; quo loci tibi cum ferax vinea est, tum praeter ipsam praedium magno non minus domino, quod te tuosque plurifaria frugum mansionumque dote remoretur. 2. ilicet si horreis apothecisque seu penu impleta destinas illic usque ad adventum hirundinum vel ciconinum Iani Numaeque ningidos menses in otio fuliginoso sive tunicata quiete transmittere, nobis quoque parum in oppido fructuosae protinus amputabuntur causae morarum, ut, dum ipse nimirum frueris rure, nos te fruamur, quibus, ut recognoscis, non magis cordi est aut voluptati ager cum redditibus amplis quam vicinus aequalis cum bonis moribus. vale.

## BOOK II. XIV. TO MAURUSIUS

have not only a fertile vineyard<sup>1</sup> but also a farm which is as great as is its great owner, to keep hold of you and your company by its manifold endowment of grain and dwelling-places. 2. Well then, if it is your intention, when your barns, storehouses and household stores have been duly replenished, to spend the snowy months of Janus and Numa<sup>1</sup> there in sooty idleness or "ungowned ease,"<sup>2</sup> remaining until the coming of the swallow and the stork, I too will at once cut short my unfruitful excuses for lingering in town, so that while you, of course, enjoy the fruits of your land, I at the same time may enjoy the fruits of your society; for (as you well know) an estate making large returns is no more attractive and delightful to me than a neighbour of my own age and of high character. Farewell.

<sup>1</sup> January and February.

<sup>2</sup> Martial X. 51. 6.

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